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Christ's Way to India's Heart

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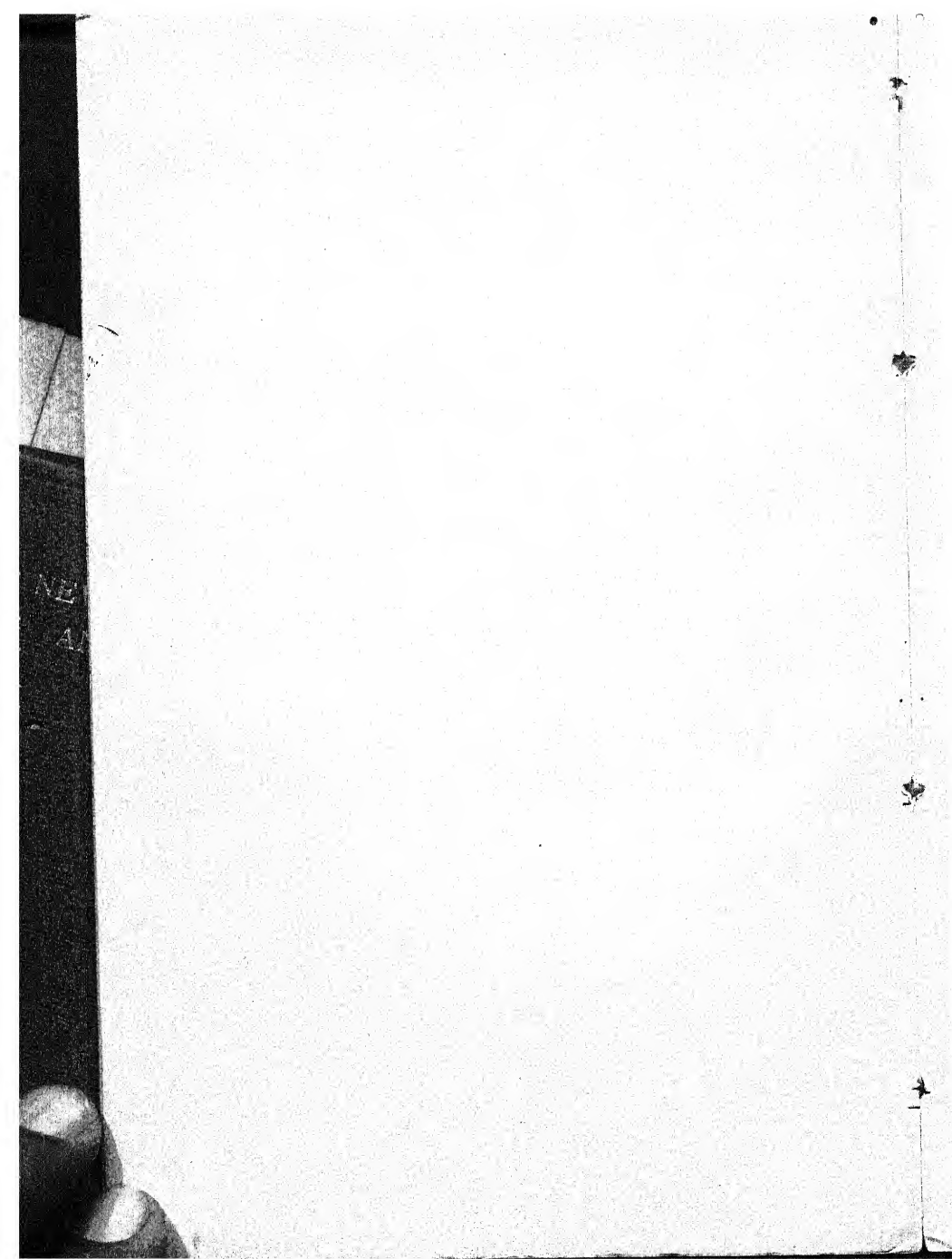
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Foreword 	i
Introduction 	1
CHAP. I:—	
The Long Reign of Hinduism ...	5
CHAP. II:—	
"Your Ways are not My Ways" ...	11
CHAP. III:—	
The One and the Many ...	22
CHAP. IV:—	
"The Poor have the Gospel Preached to Them" 	33
CHAP. V:—	
Dissolving Ancient Enmities ...	46
CHAP. VI:—	
He Builds His Church ...	59
CHAP. VII:—	
The Help of His Friends ...	77
CHAP. VIII:—	
Conclusions and Recommendations ...	95



FOREWORD.

THE task of bringing the peoples of India under the redeeming influence of Christ and the problems raised by the castes and religions of this land have been among the most fascinating studies in the history of the Church. Though India has at present more Christians than China and Japan put together, the Christian forces in India are constantly asking why the progress has been so slow and why after three hundred years of modern Missions only six millions, that is, only one-sixtieth of the population have followed Christ's way of life.

This spirit of dissatisfaction and enquiry has always led Church leaders to study the causes that operate in particular fields for the comparative success or failure of the missionary enterprise. It is well known that the Gospel has had its most arresting success among the groups known as Out-castes. This led to a scientific survey of the work among these people, undertaken by Dr. Pickett some six years ago; the results of which were embodied in his book *Christian Mass Movements in India*.

Scarcely did the book issue from the Press when it was noticed that the Group conversion among the Out-castes in Andhra Desa had definitely led to similar movements—though on a smaller scale—among the social groups immediately above them. The National Christian Council immediately requested Dr. Pickett to undertake this additional survey for the information of the whole of India. This book is the long-looked-

for Report of this survey, which owing to many unavoidable causes was delayed much against the anticipation of the author and of the Council.

This is not the place to anticipate Dr. Pickett's conclusions which are summarized in the last chapter. In view of the widespread interest these movements in the Andhra Desa have evoked, I would commend all Church leaders and missionaries to give careful consideration to the propositions Dr. Pickett assembles there.

God alone can touch the hearts of people. The forces that make for change of religious allegiance on the part of men are many and often beyond human analysis. Such a study as this volume reports can only be considered as indicating the lines along which Christ's followers may intelligently co-operate with Him in accomplishing His purposes for mankind. It is our duty to watch the movements of the Spirit lest we frustrate God's work by our unbelief, indifference or mismanagement of potential situations. We need divine illumination 'to have a right judgment in all things.'

V. S. DORNAKAL.

CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART

BY J. WASKOM PICKETT,

INTRODUCTION.

THIS book is a product of six years of travel and study in the field of missionary enterprise in India, undertaken at the request and conducted under the guidance of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon. The objects of the study were to collect factual data about the mass movements to Christianity which have developed in many parts of India, and in the light of those data to examine critically the policies and programmes of the Churches and Missions. For nearly twenty years prior to undertaking this responsibility the writer had been a missionary in India.

In the fourth year of the study the book *Christian Mass Movements in India* was published.⁽¹⁾ It dealt primarily with group movements to Christianity from within the Depressed Classes, but it also contained a chapter on movements which were then developing among Hindus of the Middle Classes in parts of the Telugu, or Andhra, country in South India.

The continuance and expansion of those Middle Class movements, and a growing appreciation of their significance for the work of the Christian Church in other parts of India, led the National Christian Council

(1) Pickett, J. Waskom. *Christian Mass Movements in India*. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1933. Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House, 1934.

2 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART

to ask that they be further studied. Those movements have already brought into the Church more than forty thousand persons in groups representing at least forty-eight castes, and are growing rapidly in strength. Elsewhere, few members of any of the Middle Castes have become Christians.

It is interesting to note that when the Telugu Church Council of the Church of England held its first meeting in 1876, it was remarked that the weak feature of the Church was that there were no middle caste converts. Hundreds from the Depressed Classes were being baptized yearly, and high-caste converts were occasionally entering the Church, one by one, but the Middle Classes were unrepresented and unreached.⁽¹⁾

Now, for the first time in any part of India, the Church has been brought face to face within its own membership with all the problems of the village community. Careful analysis and appraisal is required to enable the Indian Church in all its branches, the associated Missions and the related Churches abroad, to meet the obligations which this development brings to them severally and collectively. Specific questions on which light is sought concern (1) how the opportunities presented by these movements can be used so as to realise in this Telugu country the ideal of the Kingdom of God as presented by Christ to his disciples, and (2) what the Christian forces in other parts of India can learn from this situation to help them to achieve comparable success in their several areas.

(1) History of the Church Missionary Society. Vol. 3, P. 166 London, 1899.

About half of the author's time during the last two and a half years has been spent in assembling and interpreting data about these movements. Several processes have been used in acquiring information. Church and Mission reports covering a period of more than a hundred years have been examined. A schedule of enquiry, prepared with the aid of experience in the earlier investigation, has been used in interviewing almost a thousand adult converts from forty-two castes, mainly of the Sudra rank, but including a few which are regarded as Kshattriyas, Vaishyas and Brahmins. Hundreds of interviews have been obtained with Christians whose origins were among the Depressed Classes. Approximately three-fourths of the latter interviews were with typical village laymen, and one-fourth with ministers, catechists, evangelists and school teachers. Conferences have been held with denominational and interdenominational groups of representative Christian leaders, Indian and non-Indian, including one in which the entire membership of the Andhra Christian Council participated.

Hardly had the study of the fruitful fields in the Telugu country been started when it became necessary to turn our attention to fields in other areas where the yield has been disappointingly small. A number of Churches and Missions associated with the National Christian Council urgently requested an investigation of situations in areas where work had been carried on for decades, even generations, without producing a continuing Christian Church. Fifty years ago the veteran Sherring remarked:

It is a startling and suggestive fact, that the plans of action existing in one mission will secure

4 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEARTS

scarcely a dozen converts, while other plans in another mission similarly situated and among the same class of people, will produce a multitude of converts every year.⁽¹⁾

The contrast that startled Sherring demands consideration to-day. We could not reject this plea to study the seemingly unfruitful fields, and have spent much of the other half of our time since the publication of *Christian Mass Movements in India*, in that study. Thus attention has alternated between areas where thousands of all castes and classes are being added to the Church and areas where the Church, apart from employees and other dependents of the Missions, despite many years of missionary effort, hardly exists.

Thus two studies, begun independently, have proceeded side by side. They were early recognised as complementary to each other and gradually have merged into one. Fortuitously united, they provide the subject matter of this book.

(1) Sherring, Rev. M.A. *History of Protestant Missions in India*. London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884.

CHAPTER I.

THE LONG REIGN OF HINDUISM.

THE heart of India is held by Hinduism. For more than two thousand years it has known no other rule. Creeds, customs, ideals and objects of allegiance have changed, but only within the broad limits allowed by the nature of Hinduism. The distinguishing concepts of Hinduism have been constantly dominant. The Buddhist heresy, arising in the Fifth Century, B. C., within the fold of Hinduism, almost won sovereignty, but eventually it was defeated and expelled from the land of its birth to triumph and survive on foreign soil. From without, the supremacy of Hinduism in India has never been threatened, despite the persistent endeavour of Islam dating from the Eighth Century, and the intermittent efforts of Christianity beginning we do not know when, but at least as early as the middle of the Second Century.

Outside of India Hinduism has been unable to hold the complete allegiance of any people, but has lost almost the whole of what was once a vast domain. Buddhism now rules Burma, Siam and Ceylon. Islam holds the heart of the Malay peninsula and the East Indies. Christian faith prevails in the Philippines, which seem to have been the easternmost province ruled in Hinduism's maximum expansion.

The number of India's people who call themselves Moslems has slowly but steadily grown until it is now approximately one-fourth of the total population; but the heart of India is as yet a very distant goal for

6 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART

Islam. Indeed, Hinduism wields such power over the minds of the masses of illiterate Indian Moslems that the question sometimes arises whether it is not more nearly dominant therein than is the iconoclastic Islam of the Arabian Prophet.

Early Christian missions established a Church that has remained through the centuries, but during most of that time it has been confined to a small area in South India and has made little or no effort to extend the rule of Christ over India. Modern Christian missions, Roman Catholic and Protestant, have been instrumental in establishing Churches that number more than six millions of members and are adding thousands every month to those who confess that Christ is Lord, but the most optimistic partisan could not claim that the heart of India has been, or is about to be, won for Christ.

It is significant that Islam and the ancient Syrian Christian Church have developed their strength on the borderlands of India. Islam is dominant in Baluchistan, Kashmir, Sindh and the North West Frontier Province and claims the allegiance of a majority in the Punjab, Eastern Bengal and parts of Malabar. The Syrian Christian Church survived in strength only along and near the coast in Central and North Travancore.

The strength of Hinduism is in its elasticity and its genius for absorption. It has steadily defended its empire by welcoming and adopting potential rivals. While its own most characteristic thinking has produced a highly metaphysical pantheism, it has extended hospitality to polytheism, monotheism, and atheism. As through the centuries aboriginal tribes have been incorporated into Hinduism, their tribal gods have

been naturalised, and their rites absorbed. Within the Hindu fold both monotheism and atheism have arisen repeatedly and been propagated without opposition.

To the non-Hindu, one of the most puzzling aspects of Hinduism "is its simultaneous acceptance of such [contradictory systems of belief and worship as polytheism and monotheism, atheism and pantheism, all of which may be found not only in the common life of one village, but also in the professed belief and practice of one person. Popular Hinduism, as we have encountered it in this study, from the southernmost point of India to the shadows of the Himalayas in the Punjab, is a bewildering complex of beliefs and practices. Along with numerous survivals of totemism and other products of primitive man's thinking, we find existing, in strange contrast, several advanced schools of philosophy.

It would seem that Hinduism's hospitality has bred a fatal tolerance in its opponents. Forces that might have overthrown Hinduism in direct and sustained conflict have been welcomed, made tolerant, isolated, reduced to the complacent acceptance of a minor influence, and finally so completely absorbed that their separate existence or identity has ceased. Competent students have suggested that both the ancient Syrian Church, which in its long struggle for existence has been aided by frequent stimuli from the Church in other lands, and Islam, which, likewise, has often been strengthened by new arrivals from outside, were both in the process of being absorbed by Hinduism when modern Christian missions came to India. Unquestionably the impact of Christian missions from the West

8 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART

has revived in these monotheistic forerunners an appreciation of elements of their heritage which were being neglected and has strengthened their fundamental antagonism to many aspects of popular Hinduism of which both had become tolerant.

The experience of India's two greatest rulers, the emperors Asoka and Akbar, affords classic examples of this power of Hinduism. As Asoka built his vast Buddhist empire and propagated his creed to all quarters of the sub-continent, including areas in the north-west that are no longer a part of India, Hinduism apparently offered little opposition. Yet Asoka exposed his religious system to the subtle influence of the Brahman intellectuals who administered Hinduism and, in a period of time which is brief in India's history, the apparently triumphant Buddhism was absorbed by the apparently defeated Hinduism.

Akbar, most enlightened of a long line of Moghul emperors, abandoned the efforts of his ancestors to promote Islam in India and compounded a new religion from Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian, Christian and Islamic elements. Says Vincent Smith "The new religion, dubbed the Divine Monotheism, or Divine Religion, rejected wholly the claim of Mohammad to be an inspired prophet, and practically replaced him by the emperor."⁽¹⁾ But Akbar's eclectic religion did not last. His few followers either reverted to Islam or were absorbed by Hinduism.

There have been many other efforts to achieve a synthesis of Hinduism with Islam. Kabir, by origin a Mohammedan, made such an effort in the first half of

(1) Smith, Vincent. *The Oxford History of India*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1919.

the 15th. century: his followers are fully incorporated in Hinduism to-day. Sikhism, also a 15th. century product, now the strongest of the synthetic faiths built from Hinduism and Islam, is more and more pro-Hindu and anti-Islamic in sentiment and practice. In its stronghold, the Punjab, it is regarded by many as a stalwart defender of Hinduism against the forces of Islam and Christianity. India has recently witnessed the spectacle of the President of the Hindu Mahasabha appealing to Dr. Ambedkar, leader of a section of the Depressed Classes which has renounced Hinduism and declared its purpose to adopt another religion, to choose Sikhism and thus remain within the Hindu social system. The Brahmo-Samaj of Raja Ram Mohun Roy and Keshub Chunder Sen, which has been in fellowship with the Unitarian Christian Churches of the West, has recently provided a president to the Hindu Mahasabha.

The Abbe Dubois wrote his pessimistic *Letters on the State of Christianity in India* at a time when Hinduism had shown its power of reabsorbing many thousands who had professed the faith of Roman Catholicism.⁽¹⁾

Is India then irrevocably committed to Hinduism? Must all efforts to win her heart meet defeat? The Christian Church cannot reach that conclusion. The psalmist's confidence that "all kings shall bow down before him; all nations shall serve him" is a cardinal belief of the Church. A modern psalmist has led millions in exultantly singing: "Jesus shall reign

(1) Dubois, The Abbe J. A. *Letters on the State of Christianity in India*. London: Longmans Green. 1823.

10 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART'S

where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run." The writer believes not only that Christ will rule the heart of India, but that he is even now revealing the way of his triumphal march to that sovereignty.

CHAPTER II.

"YOUR WAYS ARE NOT MY WAYS."

THE Prophet Isaiah represents God as saying to His people that their thoughts are not His thoughts, nor their ways His ways. To apply the prophet's words to the missionary movement of the Christian Church in India may seem presumptuous. But, if we accept the thesis that God has revealed His thoughts and His ways in His dealings with the Church in India, and that His purposes have been achieved in a larger measure where a living Church has been established than in areas where there is no such Church, the application seems to be appropriate.

It is our belief, born of this study, that this divergence of the thought and ways of God's people from the thought and ways of God is revealed in the Church's approach to India. From the earliest times the Christian Church appears to have chosen the privileged classes as the first objective of its missionary effort in India. The assumption that India would be brought to Christ by converts from among the Brahmans and other influential, or "superior," classes, has been very widely held in the several periods of missionary activity. With it has often been linked the belief that the early conversion of the under-privileged classes, in particular the Untouchables, or Out-castes, would prove a barrier to the conversion of the middle and higher castes. Yet our study of the record convinces us that God's plan for the conversion of India has been quite the reverse; that His first objective has

been the under-privileged masses, and that more numerous and more difficult barriers to the spread of Christianity have been created by the policies pursued in work for the higher caste beneficiaries of the Hindu social order than by the much-feared identification of Christianity with the oppressed and despised victims of that order.

Policy of the Early Church.

The first missionary to India of whom we have a clear record was Pantaenus of Alexandria, who was in India in the year 180. However, he found a Church already in existence and in possession of a Hebrew text of St. Mathew's Gospel. Jerome tells us that Pantaenus was sent out by Bishop Demetrius of Alexandria, "that he might preach Christ among the Brahmans."⁽¹⁾

We do not know whether Pantaenus's predecessors had shown his preference for the Brahmans. Neither can we say with confidence that the Syrian Church in South India is descended from the Church with which Pantaenus had fellowship. But, such evidence as we possess points to the conclusion that the preference of Bishop Demetrius for the Brahmans reflected the policy of the Church at that time. It seems highly probable that the Syrian Church originated in a ministry to the privileged classes. Certain copper plates of the Eighth Century assign to the Syrian Christians high rank in the caste-bound social order of that period, placing them on the same level as the aristocracy of the Malabar coast. Until quite recent times the members

(1) Smith, George. *The Conversion of India*. New York; Fleming H. Revell. 1894.

of this Church made no effort to win converts from a social level lower than their own. Prior to the opening of a mission by the Anglican Church, the depressed masses of that region were neglected by the Syrian Church, and when any desired conversion, Syrian Christians discouraged them. A recent historian tells us that when the Anglican Church admitted converts from the Depressed Classes to an equal status in Schools and Churches, some of its Syrian members withdrew.⁽¹⁾

"European Brahmins."

Robert de Nobile, who, like Francis Xavier, was of noble birth, arrived in India in 1605 and became the leader of a group of Roman Catholic missionaries who so strongly preferred the conversion of the privileged classes that they adopted the mode of life of the Brahmins, including their attitude of contempt towards the lower castes. Says the Abbe Dubois:

They saw that in order to fix the attention of these people, gain their confidence, and get a hearing, it was indispensably necessary to respect their prejudices, and even to conform to their dress, their manner of living, and form of societies; in short, scrupulously to adopt the customs and practices of the country. With this persuasion, they at their first outset announced themselves as European Brahmins.⁽²⁾

These Jesuit missionaries wore saffron robes, put caste marks on their foreheads, and abstained from

(1) Cheriyan, P. *The Malabar Christians and the Church Missionary Society* 1816-1840. Kottayam; The Church Missionary Society Press. 1935.

(2) Dubois, The Abbe J. A. *Letters on the State of Christianity in India.*

meat like the Brahmans. At first this policy was a success, and many of the privileged classes professed faith; but disillusionment came in its train. In assessing the causes of failure and wholesale Christian reversion, the Abbe Dubois, two hundred years later, sagely observed that the Brahmans inevitably saw that the claims of these early Jesuit missionaries to represent a European Brahman caste were disproved by the lay Christians who followed them to India. For the Brahmans did not in that period, any more than to-day, exclusively follow their priestly occupation, and they naturally accepted these early European laymen as belonging to the same social order as their own clergy. Commenting on the disillusionment of the Brahmans, Dubois says "it is curious to note that the Brahman does not believe in his religion and yet outwardly observes it; while the Christian believes in his, and yet he does not outwardly observe it. What a sad and shameful contrast!"⁽¹⁾

The Outlook of Early Protestant Missionaries

Early non-Roman missionaries in the modern era likewise gave primary attention to the Brahmans, and many went the length of avoiding contact with the Depressed Classes. Without exception, so far as we have discovered, the pioneer non-Roman missionaries preached first to the higher castes in the expectation that they, being converted, would lead other castes to Christ. A convert from the Brahmans was commonly accounted a valuable asset, one from the Untouchables a heavy liability. The Danish Mission, founded at

(1) Dubois, The [Abbe J. A. *Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies*. (Revised Edition), Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1906.

Tranquebar in 1706, cautiously respected caste and accepted its distinctions. When, more than fifty years later, the veteran Schwartz was criticised, he replied:

"Both at Tranquebar and here (Trichinopoly) are nearly an equal number of the higher castes and lower. Here the men and the women of the higher castes sit on one side, and on the other those of the lower. I have carefully avoided all coercive measures, and thus have met with fewer difficulties. Even at the administration of the Sacrament sometimes one or other of the lower castes has first approached to receive, and it has not been taken notice of.....The country priests and the catechists are of the higher castes.⁽¹⁾

This policy of the Tranquebar Mission was adopted by other Protestant Missions in South India. While preaching against the more severe oppressions inflicted upon the out-castes these missionaries directed their efforts to the higher castes, and when out-castes came with little encouragement they were received quietly and held in subordinate positions in the Church. The Tranquebar missionaries refused to ordain their ablest catechist, a convert from the Roman Catholic Church, because his pre-Catholic ancestry was of Depressed Class origin.

An Early Protest

This is not to say that there were no dissentient voices. The C. M. S. missionary, Rhenius, on behalf of himself and several associates, delivered a protest to Bishop Heber, who died in Trichinopoly while investigating the policy of caste distinctions. Heber's successor, Bishop Wilson, vigorously attacked the

(1) The Missionary Register, London: July. 1813.

16 CHRIST'S WAY TO INDIA'S HEART

problem. He found common among Indian Churches fifty usages to which he objected as reflecting sinful caste feeling. These usages included different castes entering by different doors, sitting on separate sides of the Church, receiving communion separately, sometimes with different cups, and, much to his surprise and indignation, the Christian missionary partaking of communion last, for fear of defiling the Sudra communicants.

Caste in Education

From the days of Ziegenbalg and other Danish missionaries at Tranquebar in the early 18th Century, to the present, Protestant Missions have taken a leading part in education. Ordinarily mission schools have been started in the hope that they would prove to be evangelising agencies. A century ago many missionaries expected that the dissemination of modern knowledge in the English language would lead directly to the adoption of the Christian faith. And they were not alone in that expectation. Macaulay, author of the famous Education Minute of February 2, 1835, which led the Government of India to adopt the policy of maintaining schools in the English language, wrote on October 12, 1836 to his father, who was an ardent supporter of missions:

It is my firm belief that, if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence: and this will be effected without any effort to proselytize—merely by the natural operation of knowledge and reflection.⁽¹⁾

(1) Trevelyan, Sir George. *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*. London: Longmans, 1908.

It is significant that with these expectations the mission schools of that period, with very few exceptions served the children of the privileged classes exclusively. That is not altogether surprising. The higher castes were accustomed to the idea of literacy for a limited number of their men and boys; the Untouchables were not. Moreover, public opinion was strongly opposed to the idea of education for the Untouchables. Not only in the South a hundred years ago, but throughout India in the decades of rapid expansion that followed, mission schools in the cities and towns generally recruited their students from the higher Hindu castes and the more prosperous Moslems.

Early in the second half of the 19th century many mission schools in South India suffered heavy reductions of enrolment as a result of admitting the Untouchables for the first time. In that period, and after the beginning in the Andhra area of the mass movement of the Untouchables into Christianity, one of the ablest of the C. M. S. missionaries, Mr. Noble of Masulipatam, founder of the college that now bears his name, threatened to resign from the mission rather than to agree to the enrolment in his school of boys belonging to the Untouchables or converted from among them.

Since writing this chapter we have learned of a Christian College declining, as recently as six years ago, to admit a young man from the Depressed Classes on the ground that a number of Hindu students would withdraw and the College was in no position to stand the resultant loss of income.

A report of Augustus Cammerer of the Danish Mission, tells of two schools, one attended by Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians, Brahmans,

Sudras and Moslems; the other, definitely inferior, attended by Untouchables with a sprinkling of Christians (converted Untouchables?) and Moslems. The schools established by Schwartz and Christian in Tanjore, 1785-89, "consisted chiefly of children of Brahmans and merchants (Vaishyas)."⁽¹⁾

The Principal of the Serampore Baptist College, in his report for 1822, says that money allowance was made for six Brahmans to eat separately: "It may not be improper to add that, since they have been on the College Foundations, neither the Brahman nor the Mussalman youths have been requested to do anything which, in the least degree, militates against their idea of caste." But Serampore soon adopted an uncompromising attitude towards caste in baptisms and communion services.

Wrong Premises

There are even now areas in India where missionaries and Indian ministers work almost exclusively among the higher castes. Last year our study took us into an area where, although a movement to Christianity had begun among the Depressed Classes and was spreading rapidly, a majority of the Indian ministers believed that it was better to work exclusively among the higher castes. Their spokesmen expressed regret for the baptism of members of the Depressed Classes by several of their colleagues, explaining that they generally believed that the Brahmans and other high-caste Hindus should be converted first. When it was pointed out that they and their predecessors had worked in that area for more than sixty years on a

(1) The Missionary Review. London, July 1813.

programme devised to win high-caste Hindus only and were unable to show twenty converts, they replied that the attitude of the higher castes towards Christianity was being gradually improved. Yet, when we tested their claim, we found that the higher castes were distinctly less friendly than in the adjoining territory where no missionary work for the higher caste Hindus had been undertaken.

When Dr. Clough, pioneer helper of the great masses of Madigas in the field of the American Baptist Telugu Mission, received into the Church the first group from that lowly caste, the higher caste Hindus whom he had been instructing were incensed and made it plain that he must choose between them and the Madigas. Several of his colleagues, both Indian and American, were disturbed when he chose the Madigas. In fact, he hesitated over the dilemma, and eventually made his decision under a sense of Divine compulsion. Since then approximately a half million Madigas have entered the Church of Christ.

It is in no spirit of censure that we write of the preference for converts of the higher castes shown by nearly all the early missionaries. While it may be argued that the early missionaries failed to win the Brahmans to any appreciable extent because of their inability to make a convincing presentation of the Christian Message and the ever-present intangible human factor, we are convinced that their mistake lay in thinking that the Brahman held the key to the mind and heart of India, a mistake from which a correct understanding of the Gospel they proclaimed and the moving of the Spirit of God in the history of the Church would have saved them. It is, however,

easy to be wise after the event. If we put ourselves in their place in the vast, unknown field they had entered we shall understand how compelling appeared to be the reasons for the assumptions on which they worked. They found the Brahmans in positions of authority, outranking socially the country's political rulers and wielding power as their administrators and religious mentors. They were also acknowledged by the masses as intellectual and religious leaders. The Depressed Classes, on the other hand, were illiterate, inarticulate as to their need and creed, uncouth and apparently deprived.

The Natural Conservatism of the Privileged Classes.

But the very facts about the Brahmans that made the missionaries eager to enlist them as the first converts militated against their conversion. They were the beneficiaries of the Hindu social order, and the beneficiaries of any social order are naturally conservative. Hinduism conferred upon them many privileges which they prized and desired to protect. They recognized in the preaching of the Christian Gospel a menace to their position. Few Brahmans were converted; as a class they emphatically rejected Christianity. This should not occasion surprise. When have the privileged classes in any social order welcomed proposals for a change? Monarchy has generally been afraid of democracy. Wealthy capitalists have opposed socialism. Slave owners have fought to keep their slaves.

During the course of this study the writer heard frank statements made by Brahmans, landowners and merchants which reflected the conservatism that is produced by special privilege. One young Brahman said:

YOUR WAYS ARE NOT MY WAYS 21

"Your Christ is truly a Saviour for the Depressed Classes, but for us Brahmans he is a destroyer. We controlled everything in this district before the Mission was started. Now the people respect the Madiga school teacher more than they do us. You can't expect us to love your Christ."

A rich landowner remarked:

"Christianity may be good for the country. It is certainly good for the slaves. But when a landlord becomes a Christian he rejects the religion that gave him honour, wealth, power and everything."

A merchant declared:

"I don't like your religion. It teaches me that God loves my Sweeper (scavenger) as much as he loves me. Hinduism is more reasonable and likeable. It tells me that the gods love me more than any common man."

To break through the barriers erected by special privilege and win the heart of a man to genuine spiritual religion is an extremely difficult task. Our Lord referred to that fact in His statement about the chance of a rich man getting into heaven. But we have since placed the burden of this qualification on the poor man. It is more frequently *his* motives that are suspect; it is *he* who is called a "Rice-Christian."

CHAPTER III.

THE ONE AND THE MANY.

DR. B. R. Ambedkar, whose call to the Depressed Classes to renounce and forsake Hinduism startled India in October 1935, has criticized Christian Missions in Western India as an instrument of desocialization. In a personal discussion with the writer he distinguished clearly between the Gospel, as presented in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles, and the influence of Christian Missions as he appraised it in certain districts of the Bombay Presidency. "When I read the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and certain passages of St. Paul's epistles I feel that I and my people must all be Christians, for in them I find a perfect antidote to the poison Hinduism has injected into our souls and a dynamic strong enough to lift us out of our present degraded position, but when I look at the Church produced by Christian Missions in the districts around Bombay I have quite a different feeling. Many members of my own caste have become Christians and most of them do not commend Christianity to the remainder of us. Some have gone to boarding schools and have enjoyed high privilege. We think of them as finished products of your missionary effort and what sort of people are they? Selfish and self-centered. They don't care a snap of their finger what becomes of their former caste associates so long as they and their families, or they and the little group who have become Christians, get ahead. Indeed, their chief concern with reference to their old caste associates is to

hide the fact that they were ever in the same community. I don't want to add to the number of such Christians."

A Measure of Truth in the Charge

This is a terrible indictment. We would like to believe that it is not deserved. But there is in it a considerable measure of truth. Christian missionaries from the West are the product of a social order in which rugged individualism is highly esteemed. They bring to India not only the Gospel which they proclaim but a social pattern and a way of life that are by no means exclusively Christian in origin or nature. They tend to assume that the relation of the individual to the community with which they have been familiar from childhood is the Christian norm and to commend it to the converts with whom they may be associated. Their assumption may be unspoken and even unformed in conscious thought, but it will not on that account be less potent in its influence upon their associates. A high proportion of what a boy or girl learns in a boarding school is not consciously taught by any one. The same is true of the learning of an individual or a family introduced into a Mission circle for spiritual instruction.

When Selfishness Follows Conversion

This marginal learning, unconsciously imparted, may be completely at variance with the conscious desire and purpose for which the school or the Mission is maintained. So it happens that a boy of Dr. Ambedkar's caste may be consciously taught in school and Church to follow the Christ who said, "If any man come after me let him deny himself and take up his

cross and follow me" and who gave his life that those who believe on him might be saved, and yet what the boy really learns may be to stand on his rights as an individual, disown all obligations to the group in which he was born and pursue a strictly selfish programme of personal enrichment. In the course of this investigation we came across a number of incidents that illustrate Dr. Ambedkar's complaint. We listened to a man making an impassioned plea to close all work among the Depressed Classes and use the money thus saved "to provide scholarships for second and third generation Christians and to set Christians up in business." He argued that the conversion of additional members of the Depressed Classes would be unfair to those Christians who, like himself, were trying to improve their economic position and social status. "We need all the money Missions can command to educate our children." Yet we learned from others that his father was a "convert" from the Depressed Classes and that he had attended Mission schools on scholarships for at least nine years. We met several preachers who told us without apparent embarrassment that they do not preach to or visit the Depressed Classes because it would disturb their relations with their high-caste neighbours. One of these preachers said, "Several Sweepers here want to become Christians, but if I should go to their homes to instruct them, I would be treated in the village as a Sweeper and would lose all the social advantages I have gained as a Christian." And that preacher's forefathers had been Sweepers!

A young man who had failed in the college matriculation examination applied for a teaching position "in some school attended by children of respectable

families." On being questioned concerning that stipulation he said frankly "Having come from the Madigas, I want to associate with respectable people and learn to hide my origin. "But" don't you want to help others to escape, as you have escaped, from that life of oppression?" "I'd be glad for others to escape but I can't afford to help them."

Evidence for the Defense

Dr. Ambedkar's indictment concerns areas in which Christian conversion has commonly led to a break of the convert with his community. The confirmatory evidence which we have collected comes almost entirely from areas where converts have been won by individual decision or where education and training have alienated privileged Christians from their unprivileged fellows.

Our records show that in more than 2,000 interviews in the mass-movement areas of Andhra Desa in this and our earlier study we have never once been told that Christianity has made men selfish. On the contrary our forms record scores of statements about selfish people being transformed by Christ's influence upon them. A group of Erukulas in Guntur district explained their desire to become Christians by saying "We see that in this Kala Yug, when everyone else is self-centered and wicked, the Christians alone seek to do good to all classes." An old man asked for baptism while we were interviewing him. He explained his request in these words: "My son was a trial, a burden and a disgrace to us. He cared only for his own way in everything. But last year with many others of our village he became a Christian. Since then he is altogether different. He does everything for his mother

and me now. We want to please him and be changed as he has been." A Reddi, highly respected in his village had begun to attend Church a few weeks before our visit. In our interview he made a full confession of Christian faith, which he explained by relating these incidents: "The Waddaras of this village were a bad lot. Many had been convicted of crime. But three years ago they became Christians. Since then there has been no complaint against any of them. They are good neighbours. When a storm blew the roof off my house two months ago and my own caste fellows did nothing, three of these converted Waddaras came to my rescue.

"Three Madiga families came to the village a year ago. I saw at once that they were not like our Madigas who have been Christians as long as I can remember. They were wild and barbarous. But after a few months I saw a change in them. They quit drinking and fighting, they improved their houses and began wearing clean clothes. I asked what had happened and learned that they had begun attending the Church services and the preacher was preparing them for baptism." That socializing effect of Christianity was mentioned by many non-Christians whom we interviewed in Andhra Desa.

The Missionaries' Unjustifiable Preference for Individual Accessions.

Missionaries from the West commonly approach the Christian task in India with a strong preference for individual, as opposed to group, accessions to the Church. Yet the record shows that the Church has grown in India chiefly through group accessions. Nowhere does it appear that the Church has become firmly

established in typical Indian conditions, so that it is capable of living and growing without foreign support, except where group movements have taken place.

The process of extracting individuals from their setting in Hindu or Moslem communities does not build a Church. On the contrary it arouses antagonism against Christianity and builds barriers against the spread of the Gospel. Moreover that process has produced many unfortunate, and not a few tragic, results in the lives of those most directly concerned. It has deprived the converts of the values represented by their families and friends and made them dependent for social support to the good life and for restraint on evil impulses upon men and women, their colleagues in Christian faith, with whom they have found it difficult to develop fellowship and a complete sense of community. It has sacrificed much of the convert's potential evangelistic influence by separating him from his people. Lastly, it has produced anaemic Churches, that know no true leadership and are held together chiefly by common dependence upon the Mission or the missionary. Converts won by independent personal decision become, in a high proportion of cases, a charge upon Mission funds. But in group movements the question of direct Mission support for the converts seldom arises.

The Rise of Individualism in Western Religion

It is not surprising that missionaries from Europe and North America have preferred separate individual accessions to the Church, for an extreme individualism underlies much thinking about religion in the Churches of the West. But we may well ask whether the spread of the Church in other lands, including those of the

West, has been by the methods preferred by these missionaries or by the method of group decision. The Acts of the Apostles reveal mighty group movements immediately following Pentecost. Mass movements, induced by group decision, have been common throughout Christian history and it is not clear that any race or nation has ever been brought to Christian faith except by mass movements. Whence then has this preference for separate individual accessions come? What accounts for the individualism that colours religious thinking in the West? It was not in evidence when the people of Britain were being evangelized or when the Germanic tribes were being weaned from their pagan faith, or when the Protestant Reformation swept over Great Britain, Germany, Holland and the Scandinavian countries. Its rise seems to have followed closely upon the disruption of group life produced by capitalism and industrialization. When people who had been accustomed to close social integration in communities of which their families had been a part for generations were drawn away into new localities, where they might live for months without becoming acquainted with their next-door neighbours, they were forced to independent thinking and action in realms in which they had been accustomed to group thinking and action. With the multiplication of denominations competing for members individuals have been urged to make a personal choice between theological speculations, forms of Church government, modes of baptism and other issues on which the opinion of scholars is divided. Thus the field for group action in regard to religion has been narrowed down until some have assumed and taught that religion is entirely a personal matter and is not a

subject for group action of any sort at any time. This is in startling contrast to the teaching of Jesus. He preached the kingdom of God and recognized group life in choosing twelve disciples all of one race and mostly of one grade in society. In the midst of their training he sent them to their own people to preach and heal, expressly forbidding them at that stage to go to other races. He instructed them to hold groups responsible to hear their message, "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city."

Unhappy Results of Opposing Group Action.

Resistance to the disposition of India's people to act in groups has had very unfortunate results. Years ago the writer heard a veteran missionary say, "Thank God, we have never allowed mass movements to take place in our Mission. We insist that whoever is received into the Church come on his own initiative. We have many converts from the Depressed Classes but we have never received an entire group together." The speaker was confident that his method would produce better results, but enquiry reveals that the level of Christian life is very low in that field. Many converts have returned to Hinduism and very few have adopted such fundamental Christian patterns as the abolition of child marriage and the education of girls.

In the course of the study we found evidence that many group movements into Christian faith had been blocked by the unsympathetic attitude of foreign missionaries or Indian ministers toward them. When the entire membership of one caste in four villages asked

for baptism the missionary was frightened. He responded by selecting several young men of the community to attend a Mission Boarding School with the idea that they would be properly instructed and sent back to lead the neighbours one by one to Christ. But the young men were educated away from the community. They wanted to be freed from the illiterate wives to whom they had been married as children. In this and other ways they outraged the sense of propriety of their people, with the result that the community became antagonistic to Christianity.

A Sharp Contrast.

In their attitude towards and expectation of group movements to Christ, the Churches and Missions of the very fruitful fields of Andhra Desa, where this study began, and those of the less fruitful fields to which it was later extended present sharp contrasts. In the former, group movements to Christ are regarded as natural and efforts are directed to their production; in the latter, groups are commonly treated as naturally hostile and efforts are directed toward leading individuals to break away from their groups and become Christians. This contrast is revealed when one notes the ways in which enquirers are dealt with. In the Dornakal Diocese we watched a Deanery Chairman instructing an enquirer. He wrote down the names of all the man's household, near relatives and caste fellows and asked that all meet him on his next visit to the village. He assumed that all would be interested in learning about Christ. A few weeks later in another area in South India we listened as a missionary instructed an enquirer. "You must break with all your people," said he. "They will be very angry and, if

you stand firm, they will probably drive you out of the village. Don't be afraid! God will protect you and comfort you. You will be our brother and we will help you."

We visited several areas in which the expectation is firmly established that if a man is converted he will leave his village and come to live in a Christian colony, protected, and probably employed, by the Mission. In one area where the Mission bought a large tract of land and settled converts upon it we asked a number of converts what efforts they were making to win their relatives to Christ and each one answered that their relatives would not become Christians because they preferred for one reason or another to stay where they were. They could not think of people becoming Christians except in terms of leaving their village homes and settling on Mission land.

Richer Quality of Experience Where Group Life is not Disrupted.

We are persuaded that the quality of faith and experience is very much better in the areas where group or mass movements have taken place than in areas where converts have been won by independent, individual decision. In Andhra Desa we interviewed hundreds of converts of more than forty castes. In a high proportion of such interviews we heard convincing testimonies of personal and family experience of the grace of Jesus Christ. A typical testimony was given by an aged Erukula woman. "I did not want to be a Christian until my sons and all the rest of our community urged it. They had more sense than I did and I agreed to follow them. Now I am glad, for my sins have been washed away. Every day I talk to Jesus,

my Saviour, and he gives me joy." In areas where group movements have not taken place and converts have been separated from their relatives we were disturbed by a paucity of personal testimony and a weakness of faith in the sufficiency of Christ's grace to meet India's needs. One of the distressful features in several areas is the disloyalty of families that once drew an income from the Mission. Four former evangelists, all discharged for misconduct, confessed that they had discouraged others from becoming Christians. Two of them were orphans, educated by the Mission, one was the son of a Mission school teacher and the fourth a convert who had broken with his people. All had been highly privileged. All had been "indoctrinated" in mission schools and protected against non-Christian influences. And probably all had made high professions of Christian experience, for all had been appointed evangelists. But none had lived a natural life in relation to his fellows. All had suffered a kind of desocialization. Religious experience had been to each of them too personal, not enough social. Association with missionaries and mission-paid Indian colleagues could not take the place of normal social integration in community life. Paternalistic control and pay as well as strange patterns of thought and conduct interfered with the normal processes of social control, and prevented fellowship.

To the mind of the writer the conclusion is inescapable that Christ is moving into the heart of India not along the lonely road of the detached individual but through the crowded thoroughfares of community life.

CHAPTER IV

"THE POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM"

WHEN John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus whether he was "he that should come," Jesus offered as evidence of his Mesiasahship his ministry to the afflicted and the poor: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and *the poor have the Gospel preached to them*" These facts presumably convinced John the Baptist. They are convincing many in India to-day.

The Influence of Preaching to the Poor

This generation is well aware of the apologetic value of Christ's ministry of healing. It is possible that too much attention has been given to the influence of healing as a preparation for receiving Christ's message and too little to the Christian's duty to do what he can to relieve suffering for its own sake. Such is the belief of many devoted medical missionaries. But our observations in this study lead us to believe that the apologetic value and the effectiveness of preaching the Gospel to the poor have been greatly underestimated both by Missions and by critics of Missions.

The Voice of the Critics

Critics of Missions in India frequently charge that the poor, especially the Depressed Classes, are drawn to the Church by the offer of secular benefits and not by

religious interest, feeling or conviction. A recent instance is a statement in a report by the Shahabad (Bihar) District Harijan Sevak Sangh, quoted by Mr. Gandhi in an article entitled, "How They Convert."⁽¹⁾ This statement says of a mass movement in Shahabad district: "Not a single instance can be found in which the acceptance of the new faith was due to any religious convictions.....The reasons for conversion may be roughly described as economic or socio-economic."

The Assumptions of Some Christians

Missions sometimes give the appearance of agreement with charges of this sort by seeming to expect that ministering to social and economic needs will, of itself, produce converts, and by relegating the preaching of the Gospel to a very small place in their programme. Indeed, enquiry has elicited clear evidence that some ministers assume that the poor are interested only in economic and social relief and would be totally unresponsive to the preaching of the Gospel. Two examples will suffice:

A minister, who reported fewer than a dozen converts in a ministry of 28 years, told us that he had made many approaches to the Depressed Classes but had never been able to arouse their interest. Asked what efforts he had made, he replied: "Twice I tried to start a school, once I talked to them about organizing for them a Co-operative Society, once I assisted a group of them in a court case and many times I have given medicine to the sick." "Have you ever preached to them, or prayed in their homes, or talked to any of them on the forgiveness of sins and obtaining a personal

(1) The Harijan, June 19th, 1937.

experience of God?" we asked. "No, I have never got as far as that" he replied "for we must win their interest and gratitude before preaching to them."

An evangelist with sixteen years' experience in an area where, by his own admission, the Church is weaker to-day than when he began, said concerning his programme, "I preach to the higher castes and do social service for the Untouchables." "Don't you preach to the Untouchables?" we asked. "No, they would not care to hear, nor would they understand," he answered.

Facts Against Theories

The facts, as we have found them, refute both the charges of the Hindu critics and the assumptions of the unsuccessful evangelists. There appears on the records a close relation between the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and (1) profession of faith by the poor, (2) the measure of moral, social and economic improvement achieved by the poor and (3) the influence exerted by Christian converts from the poor upon non-Christians in the neighbourhood.

Mass movements to Christianity have not occurred in areas where preaching has been neglected. We have been unable to find a single instance of a wide response by members of the Depressed Classes to an invitation to become Christians delivered without an appeal to spiritual needs. Separated from preaching and worship, services rendered to the Depressed Classes seem powerless to induce in them the desire to adopt the religion of their benefactors. Moreover, ministries of which the first objective is the meeting of social and economic needs seem to make extraordinarily little appeal to the Depressed Classes. Schools started and

maintained in the hope that they would be evangelizing agencies have produced surprisingly few converts. Co-operative Societies have neither initiated nor promoted group movements to Christian faith; on the contrary there is much evidence that their influence has retarded several such movements.

"Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God!"

Let it not be understood that we have come from this study with any convictions against a ministry to social and economic needs. Rather, we see more clearly because of this study that no ministry is fully Christian which ignores such needs. But this lesson is written across the whole experience of the Church with India's poorest people, the Depressed Classes, that no ministry to them in Christ's name arouses their hopes, and commands their faith, unless it presents the Gospel of the love of God making full provision for the need of the soul. Contrasting sharply with the testimony of the unsuccessful evangelists who thought that the Depressed Classes would not be interested in the Gospel are the statements of more than a score of men each of whom has brought several hundreds of the Depressed Classes to an open confession of Christian discipleship. As typical of these latter we take the words of two men. The first is a Deanery Chairman in the Dornokal Diocese: "My approach is always on the spiritual side. The Depressed Classes are drawn to Christ as the Saviour. It is hard to interest them by talk of social uplift, but I must show in my actions toward them the love I preach." The second is a Baptist minister in Guntur district: "For several years I preached chiefly upon the social and economic effects of being Christians and had a few converts, then I began

preaching the love of God for all mankind and the salvation which Christ has made possible for all who will receive him by faith and the converts multiplied." The two men we have quoted and many others whom we might quote to the same general effect are by their ministry changing social and economic conditions. A Methodist Episcopal pastor found that he could do very little to improve the conditions in which his people lived until he got the implications of the Gospel into their minds and hearts. After he got them to attending Church and participating reverently in the worship of God, he was able to persuade them to put windows in their living rooms, to remove the manure pits from the vicinity of their houses and even to construct and use bore-hole latrines.

The Truth about Shahabad

In the Shahabad district in Bihar, where the Harijan Sevak Sangh say that religious convictions have had no part in inducing conversions, the writer was a missionary from 1916 to 1924. After four years in the district during which many hundreds of Chamars, or leather workers were baptized, he wrote that the most difficult part of his work was to arouse a desire for better living conditions. Eagerly desiring to see economic wrongs righted and social oppression stopped, he found that converts to Christianity were inclined to extract such emotional satisfactions from their faith that they paid too little attention to the oppressive conditions under which they lived. Perhaps, with the passing of the years, they have become so eager to correct wrongs long tolerated that they give the impression of having become Christians for this one purpose.

The Chief Need of India's Poor

The Depressed Classes of India are desperately poor. But their chief economic need is not financial; it is an antidote to the poisonous ideas that have made them incapable of struggling successfully with their environment. As severe as is the physical oppression to which they are continuously subjected, the Depressed Classes could not have been reduced by its operation alone to the low state in which they have lived for centuries. Much more devastating than physical oppression has been the psychological oppression inflicted by the Hindu doctrines of karma and re-birth, which have taught them that they are a degraded, worthless people suffering just retribution for sins committed in earlier lives. It is, then, a true instinct that makes the Depressed Classes respond more eagerly to the preaching of the Christian Gospel than to any direct ministry to their social and economic ills. The concepts which the Christian Gospel gives them of themselves and of God in relation to their sufferings and sins are worth incomparably more to them than any direct social or economic service the Church could render.

Preaching the Gospel a Help to Social Betterment

Hitherto we have dealt in the main with the relation between the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and their confession of faith in Christ. The records which we have collected show a no-less impressive relation between the preaching of the Gospel and the measure of moral, social and economic progress achieved by converts after their confession of faith. Where efforts to help the poor have been concentrated upon social and economic needs to the

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR 39

neglect of the spiritual message of Christianity, there distinctly less has been accomplished in the social and economic spheres than where preaching and worship have been kept at the center of the Church's programme.

The raising of the income of a family or a group does not necessarily improve either its economic or its social condition. We have found several families whose economic condition has deteriorated badly during a period in which their incomes have risen considerably, and a larger number whose condition has improved radically while incomes have remained stationary or, even, have declined.

The records of one area show two sharply contrasting periods of activity. First came six years of zealous preaching during which hundreds of new converts were brought into the Church, schools were started and flourished both in attendance and in results, offerings were generous, and village Churches thrived. In a year of high prices and acute shortage of food the spirits of the Christians ran high. Many said that they were better off than ever before, because as Christians they had discontinued much wasteful expenditure. Then followed four years in which preaching was neglected, worship declined and attention was centered upon social and economic issues, oppression was fought in the courts and Co-operative Societies were organized and managed by the pastors and evangelists. Instead of the accelerated rate of social and economic improvement expected, the latter period brought a reaction. Co-operative Societies failed and were wound up, a sense of hopelessness and despair followed upon defeat in the courts, whole

communities returned to drink and other evils from which they had been rescued, offerings to the Church declined and accessions to the Church ceased. We do not conclude that efforts to improve the social and economic condition are a mistake. We continue to advocate the organization of Co-operative Societies under proper safeguards. But we conclude that the Gospel of Jesus Christ received into the heart and renewed each day by the worship of God works as a powerful force for the solution of social and economic problems.

The Poor Prove the Value of the Gospel for All

In Andhra Desa the movements that are bringing thousands of the middle and higher caste people to Christ are a direct result of the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and of the mighty works of Christ done among them. The three chief centers of those movements are the Palnad sub-division and adjoining areas of Guntur district, the region around Raghavapuram in Kistna district and adjoining areas of Hyderabad State, and a territory along the Godavari River around Dudgaon, Ibrahimpatnam and Nirmal in the North of Hyderabad State. In the first and second centers the upper caste converts nearly all have been won in villages where whole communities of the Depressed Classes have been Christians for periods ranging from five to seventy-five years. In the third area the upper castes and the Depressed Classes are coming together into the Church. However, in the third area hardly less than in the others, the conversion of the upper caste people is related to the prior preaching of the Gospel to the Depressed Classes. The evangelists, school teachers and pastors in all three areas are, with few exceptions, of

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR 41

Depressed Classes origin, and in the third the movements were preceded by visits of upper caste men to villages where they saw what Christ had done in the reconstruction of Depressed Class communities.

In this third area we asked an old Brahman, who had led many people of all classes and castes to Christ, why he had become a Christian and he replied, "As a Hindu I believed the Depressed Classes were altogether bad, vile and stupid. When I saw that hundreds of them, by becoming Christians, were changed in to better and wiser men than we who despised them, I knew that the Christian religion was true. I decided that I needed Christ in my life as I saw Him in theirs."

"Only Christ Can Change Men Like That"

In the region around Raghavapuram the Malas had been notorious criminals. The town itself was the head-quarters of a robber band, led by a Mala named Venkayya. When this robber chief and many of his followers were converted⁽¹⁾ a mass movement began that has brought many thousands of Malas in that region to Christ. Three miles from Venkayya's home in Raghavapuram is the village of Kammavaram, where live a number of prosperous Kamma families, several of whom have professed the Christian faith and united with the Church. On our way across the fields to the village we overtook one of the Kammas who had not yet become a Christian nor made any move in that direction. We began to converse. "Do you know the Christians of your village? we asked. "Yes, all of them." "What do you think of them?" "They are our

(1) For an account of the conversion of Venkayya see "Christian Mass Movements in India."—p.

best people." "Are all of them your best people?" "There are only Hindus and Christians in the village and the Christians are much better than we Hindus." "Do you mean that even the Mala Christians are better than you Hindus?" "Oh, yes, some of them are not as good as others, but as a whole they are better than we are." "Has being Christians made them better?" "Certainly! Before they became Christians they were robbers and murderers. Even we Kammas were afraid of them. The difference between them as they were then and as they are now is like that between the earth and the sky, between noon-day and night." "What other groups have become Christians?" "Two lower Sudra groups." "Are their lives also changing?" "Yes, in just the same way. Some were drunkards, now they don't drink." "And what of your people? Haven't some of them become Christians?" "Yes." "Are they also being changed?" "Yes, and more rapidly than the others were. It seems that we Kammas are better material than the Malas, but none of our people would have become Christians if they hadn't seen first what happened to the Malas."

"You say that you have seen many bad men changed to good men, drunkards to sober men, robbers to honest neighbours. Has that happened only to those who have become Christians? Haven't you seen any one changed like that in Hinduism?"

At this the old man seemed surprised that we should ask such a question and revealed how deeply he had been affected by what he had seen. "Never. Only Christ can change men like that." A few months later the old man and his entire family knelt before the altar in the little Church in the village and, after con-

fessing their faith, received the sacred rite of baptism, and were admitted to the Church.

Godliness Where Least Expected

A young Brahman, baptized a few months before our interview with him, said that his interest in Christianity began when he discovered that many of the Christians of his village found a deep joy in the worship of God, not only attending and participating in public worship but praying and singing in their homes, alone and as families? To quote his own words "Until I made this discovery I thought the Depressed Classes had become Christians only to displease us upper caste Hindus and to receive favours from the Mission. But then I began to realize that the Christian religion was real to them and was achieving something remarkable in them. I spoke to my father and uncle about it and they said 'The Malas are very deep and cunning, but they do not have religious natures. They are pretending and have fooled you.' I was not satisfied, and believed my father and uncle were mistaken. However, I took their advice and left the Christians alone for two years. Then a Christian clerk in a Government office reawakened my interest. I learned that he had refused a bribe equal to three months' salary. I cultivated his acquaintance and found him be a better man than any of my friends. He read his Bible every day and talked to me for hours at a time about Christ. Here was godliness where I least expected to find it. I began to read the Bible and, a little later, to attend Church. That a people who had always been excluded from the temples knew so much more about God than we Brahmans first intrigued my

interest, then convinced my mind and opened my heart to Christ."

The temples of Hinduism have been closed to the Depressed Classes through the centuries and the reading of the sacred books of Hinduism in the hearing of a member of the Depressed Classes has been forbidden under severe penalties. That the Gospel has been preached to these Classes has set Christianity off against Hinduism even more sharply than Jesus' preaching of the Gospel to the poor distinguished his ministry from that of the priests of Israel in his day.

"The Religion of the Future in these Villages."

We attended service one Sabbath morning in another village, a little more distant from Raghavapuram than is Kammavaram. In the little mud-walled and thatch-roofed Church were gathered representatives of all castes of the village. After the service we asked to be introduced to some high-caste Hindu who was not known to be sympathetic to Christianity. "There is no such man in the village," replied the pastor, "but I'll introduce you to a man who has had trouble with some of the Christians and is perhaps the most orthodox Hindu here." He took us to a man with marks upon his forehead which showed him to be a devotee of Vishnu. "Do you know the Christians of this village?" we asked. "Yes, very well." "What do you think of them?" "Some of them are very good Christians. I respect them greatly. Others are no better than we Hindus." "Should they be better?" "Yes, certainly" "Why?" "Because they know the truth and worship God, while we Hindus are still in error, practicing sorcery, obeying the Brahmans, sacrificing animals, and

worshipping idols and evil spirits." "You don't seem to believe in Hinduism," I remarked. "No, I believe in Christianity. I am going to become a Christian, though I haven't told the pastor yet. When I see what Christianity has done for these Malas and Madigas and has begun to do for the Erukulas and Yanadis, I know it is the religion of the future in these villages."

"Now, we, too, can be Saved."

In the Dornakal Diocese of the Church of India (Anglican) it is customary to hold a service of worship every evening in more than ninety per cent of the villages in which groups of Christians live. At these services, in addition to the liturgy prescribed for evening prayers, a lesson from the Bible is read and a brief sermon delivered. This regular preaching of the Word, combined with group worship, by means of a liturgy that even the illiterate learn and use, has had a remarkable effect upon the worshippers and upon public opinion. It is proving to the onlooking public that Christ Jesus is Lord and is preparing the way for Christ to the hearts of all classes in these villages. As one landlord, who enrolled as an enquirer during our visit to the village, expressed it, "This work of the Church for those whom we have despised has been as good for us as for them. It has shown us our sins and now we, too, can be saved. There was no hope for us when we did not recognize our sins."

CHAPTER V

DISSOLVING ANCIENT ENMITIES.

INDIA'S villages have suffered heavily from group enmities. Religion has been a prolific cause of conflict. The current spectacular hostility between Hindus and Moslems is of recent origin and thus far most villages have escaped its contagion. The ancient enmities of the village proceed not from the quick, sharp clash of creed with creed, but from the long, dull struggle for social status and economic advantage by castes which profess the same creed.

By granting rights and privileges, elaborately scaled, to one group of castes and imposing disabilities, of varying degrees of severity, upon another group, Hinduism has made intercaste conflicts inevitable. The doctrine of *karma* has reduced the number and severity of open conflicts by implanting in the minds of the oppressed and exploited classes a vague sense of the inevitability and justice of their suffering. But this moderating influence upon the aggrieved has been offset by the license the doctrine has been interpreted by the favoured classes as giving to them to exploit and oppress those whom their religion has branded as evil. To underpay, rob, curse, beat or otherwise oppress a man is less disturbing to the conscience than it otherwise would be, if one believes that his victim deserves all the trouble that may befall him.

Despite the deep influence upon them of the teaching that their sufferings are a just retribution for evil done by them in previous lives, the exploited classes

resent the wrongs done to them. As elsewhere, so in India, oppressors have despised their victims and victims have hated their oppressors. But this is only the beginning of group conflict and enmity in the village. The beneficiary castes have fought among themselves to increase their respective shares of privilege and power, and the maleficiary castes have fought to ease their respective sufferings at the expense of their fellow victims.

The Relation of Religion to the Causes of Enmity

That Hindu teaching and practice are related to group enmity and conflict is painfully evident. The more religious elements in village life are closer to the centres of conflict than are the less religious. Men who are active in Hindu religious practice commonly lead in enforcing the cruel discriminations against the Depressed Classes. The priests and those who regularly worship at the temples offer determined opposition to the proposal of secular politicians that the Depressed Classes be allowed to enter the temples. Orthodox families oppose while their irreligious brethren tolerate and often assist the demand of the Depressed Classes for fair play in schools and courts.

During our study a group of orthodox Hindus appealed to us to save their temples from desecration by making all of the Depressed Classes Christians. Their spokesman said, "Unless you make them Christians the politicians will force them into our temples and our worship will be polluted." A Hindu asked for Christian instruction with this explanation: "I was taught that these Depressed Classes are not fit to enter the temples. Now they are being brought in. If

the old teaching is wrong, and I *must* worship with the Depressed Classes, I prefer the company of those who have become clean, honest and intelligent. So I will worship as a Christian."

A Daily Recital of Evidence

In our Telugu tours we were deeply moved by the daily recital of evidence that Christ is dissolving these ancient enmities and uniting in one fellowship men and women who are the inheritors of prejudices, conflicts and hatreds that have afflicted their ancestors and their villages through successive generations for centuries. The testimonies recorded in our notebooks divide into three classes according as they relate changes in feelings and attitudes (1) of the higher castes toward the Depressed Classes, (2) of the Depressed Classes toward the higher castes and (3) of one caste toward another of comparable position.

Resolving the Complex of Superiority

Converts from the higher castes without exception affirmed that their attitudes toward the Depressed Classes had changed since they and the Depressed Classes had come under the influence of Christ. Analyzing their comments, we find that they attributed the change to works of grace (*a*) in the lives of Christian converts from the Depressed Classes and (*b*) in their own hearts. About ninety per cent of all higher caste converts interviewed on this point attributed their conversion wholly, or in part, to the influence upon them of changes they had observed in converts from the Depressed Classes. "I love the Depressed Classes now, because they revealed Christ to me" said a woman of

the Komati, or merchant caste. "Christ has taken hatred and pride of birth out of my heart. I can't hate any one now." Thus spoke a Reddi, who after graduation from college returned to his village and was so impressed with the transformation he found in a group of out-castes that he became a student of Christianity and was converted. A village headman, of whose thorough conversion pastor, Church members and non-Christian neighbours bore witness, declared: "I was taught that the Depressed Classes are inferior creatures whom all respectable classes have a right to curse, hate and oppress. This I never doubted until I began to observe that some of them were living honourably, forsaking drink and superstition, and worshipping God more than any of my own caste or of the Brahmans. This won my respect, but made me first angry, then sad and confused. I felt that my Hindu religion was wrong and for a time I cultivated fresh hatred for the Depressed Classes whose change of life had disproved my Hindu beliefs. But that hatred didn't last. I was baptized by a minister from the Depressed Classes and now regularly attend Church to worship God under his leadership. I want to be a brother to all of the Depressed Classes and to have fellowship with all who confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

A very recent convert from a border-line caste was not quite so broad in his conviction. "I don't hate any one more" said he, "but the only Madigas and Malas whom I respect are the Christians among them. The others are stupid, dirty and wicked."

4 A like discrimination was made by a goldsmith baptized in our presence. "I once thought that God

had cursed the Depressed Classes, so if we cursed and oppressed them we were only fulfilling God's curse upon them. Now I see that God has lifted the curse from many and allowed them to find salvation. I, too, must smile on those on whom God smiles."

A Waddar converted nearly thirty years ago and employed as a school teacher in a community of Malas and Madigas said: "The mistreatment of the Depressed Classes by Hinduism is my greatest sorrow. The change Christ is working in them and in their position in relation to the Hindus is my greatest joy. Once in my ignorance and sin I, too, despised them. Now, with the knowledge Christ has given me and my heart cleansed from the sin of contempt, I love them. Some of my former students are like members of my family. They are as intelligent, clean, honourable and lovable as are my own children."

Often in our tour we heard Christians from one of these castes praying for the conversion of members of the other caste. After one such experience we asked a leading layman of the local Church, an ex-Madiga, who claimed to be 80 years old, whether he really wanted the Malas to become Christians. He laughed as he replied, "Who wouldn't want his enemies to become good men? When I was a boy we had a fight with the Malas and my arm was broken. The Madigas around here are all Christians. If the Malas, too, are converted there'll be no more fights between us. But we know that it is our duty to pray for the conversion of all castes, and we do so. We pray most for the Malas because we hear that many of them have been converted in other places."

The Conversion of a Brahman

A Brahman, recently converted, told us that he was led to Christ by the discovery that his servant, whom he had despised as an out-caste, was, in fact, more honourable and worthy of respect than he himself. Here is the Brahman's story:

"One night during the harvest season I was in my field guarding my crops. A few nights before thieves had cut and stolen nearly a half acre of grain. My Madiga servant, a boy of about 18, was with me. I became hungry and told the lad to steal some fruit from a neighbour's tree. He politely declined saying that he could not steal. I ridiculed the idea that any Madiga would object to stealing and when he persisted in refusing I grew angry and ordered him to bring me the fruit without delay. When he again declined, I struck him and he ran away. Then I went to my neighbour's tree and helped myself. Shortly after this I started round the field ashamed of what I had done. Gradually it dawned on me that I was a thief as truly as were the men who had stolen my grain. And I had struck my servant because he would not steal. I wished the lad were back, and I debated whether I should go to the village and call him, also whether I should tell him that I was sorry I had struck him. In the field, alone at midnight, I was frightened. Just then I heard his voice. It came from under a tree some distance away. I went nearer to listen, supposing he was telling some one what I had done. But he was apparently alone. He was praying. After a while I heard him say, 'Forgive my master, Lord. He doesn't know how to overcome temptation. His gods don't help him, and he doesn't understand that he should serve Thee.'

That made me thoroughly ashamed. I tried to be angry with him for praying for me. I was humiliated that a Madiga should think he was in a better relation to God than I, a Brahman. But in my heart I knew it was true. I walked away, emboldened by the knowledge that the lad was near. A little later he rejoined me. In a few days I began studying Christianity with the result that I am now a Christian. I have found that many of the Madigas are better men than I have ever been, and my old feeling of contempt for the Depressed Classes has changed into a feeling of respect and love."

Supplanting the Sense of Grievance with a Sense of Mission

No less remarkable than the foregoing is the change which Christ has wrought in the attitudes of thousands of converts from the Depressed Classes towards members of the higher castes. The suppression of normal reactions to oppression, made necessary by their helplessness, has made the Depressed Classes peculiarly subject to abnormal or distorted reactions. They may not strike back when the landlord beats them, nor protest audibly when the money-lender overcharges them or the police constable extorts free work, or gifts, but they resent these injustices and cultivate a complex and grievous antagonism toward their oppressors. Our evidence affords convincing proof that Christ is freeing his people from this sense of grievance and giving them instead a creative sense of mission.

In the home of a Baptist convert from the Madiga caste we were asked to pray for two brothers who owned most of the land of the village and had been

oppressing the Madigas with great severity. When that layman followed with a prayer of his own, he made no reference to the oppressions, but poured out his heart to God in a plea for the brothers that they might find peace and joy and salvation in Christ.

A Lutheran minister, converted as a boy from the Depressed Classes, told us vivid stories of the mistreatment which he suffered from the higher castes before and for several years after his conversion, and of his boyhood dreams of revenge. Then he added "I am having my revenge now and it is sweeter far than in my dreams. More than a score of men and women and nearly three score of children of the higher castes have received baptism at my hand. When I hated my oppressors I felt little and mean. They were my superiors. But now that I love them and am leading many of them to Christ I have a continuous sense of elation and fulfilment. Now they are my brothers."

A village headman who is not a Christian made this understanding remark: "Many of the Depressed Classes pretend to be submissive, and very polite to us, but in their hearts they hate us. The good Christians do not humble themselves before us but they are our friends and well-wishers. In trouble we would go to them with more confidence than to most members of our own caste."

Another headman said: "One reason why we high caste people were afraid of Christianity was the belief that if the Depressed Classes were lifted out of the slavery in which we have held them they would turn against us. But now we see that they are not merely lifted out of slavery; their hearts are changed, so that they do not hate us."

Hereditary Enemies United in Christ

The main body of Christians in Andhra Desa is of Depressed Classes origin. Two castes, the Malas and the Madigas, are about equally represented in the Church. Under Hindu dominance these castes have been traditional enemies. For hundreds of years village life throughout Andhra Desa has been disturbed by this enmity. Other castes have taken sides until in some areas practically the whole population has been involved. Occasionally open warfare has occurred. Local riots have been a frequent occurrence.

Christ has brought these warring castes throughout wide territories into greatly improved relationships. Under His influence much of the age-old hostility has disappeared. In hundreds of villages groups from the two castes unite every evening in Christian worship. Children from the two groups sit side by side in class room and Church and play together in school games. Ministers of religion recruited from one caste or the other serve groups from each caste. They baptize children and new believers, comfort the sorrowing, pray for the sick, counsel the penitent, administer the sacred elements of the Holy Communion and even solemnize marriage without regard to their ancestral feud.

Reconciliation a Progressive Achievement

In many localities all signs of the ancient enmity have disappeared and in a few places the two groups have become one body in Christ. There, separate social institutions and patterns of consciousness and behaviour have given place to joint ones formed in the fellowship of the Church. This unifying work seems to be taking

place throughout the Church, but in some places the progress is slow and many obstacles are being encountered. During our search for data the persistence of prejudice came to light frequently, but rarely did we discover such antagonism within the Church as is met at almost every contact with groups of either caste who have not come under the influence of Christ. Enquiries occasionally elicited an apparent unwillingness on the part of a few Christians from one of these castes to welcome into the Church a group from the other caste, but such an attitude was never taken by an entire group of either caste and never by any one without the making of an excuse or an apology. Everywhere we found that Christ has begun a ministry of reconciliation and nearly everywhere we found men and women in whom that ministry had been so far successful that they appeared earnestly to desire the highest possible good for the erstwhile enemies of their caste.

The Tribute of Public Opinion

The public have recognized this service of Christ to the community, and are disposed to demand that Christians be free from enmity. The man who of all those with whom we conversed in Andhra Desa was least appreciative of Christianity paid unconscious tribute to Christ, the peace-maker, by naming two villages where the Malas and Madigas had been Christians "for upwards of ten years and yet quarrel as though they had never heard of Christ." He admitted that great improvement had taken place in a dozen other villages with which he was acquainted. A high school lad, who professed to be too well educated to believe in religion of any sort, complained that the

Christians of his village were "only nominal Christians" because "not more than half of them have become real friends and brothers." We asked if he did not think it was a sign of real religion when half, or almost half, of two groups who had been hereditary enemies had become "real friends and brothers." and he somewhat reluctantly agreed that it was. A sub-inspector of police said, "Serious fighting is ten times more common among non-Christian Malas and Madigas than among those who have become Christians."

Opposition, Old and New

This beneficent work of our Lord has been opposed at all stages. Individuals and groups whom caste discrimination and community conflict have favoured, and sentimentalists, to whom all that is old is sacred, have fought to prevent the changes necessary for peace and harmony. While denying fellowship and temple worship to the Depressed Classes, they have protested at every effort to minister the grace of God to these victims of their tyranny. This opposition has been reinforced by recent political developments. Candidates for elective offices have appealed to caste prejudice and communal enmity. The segregation of Christians in separate electorates in the Madras Presidency and several other provinces has made possible the exploitation of ancient enmities and a number of candidates and their friends have yielded to the temptation. In Andhra Desa new life has been infused into the Mala-Madiga feud, with a result that many village Churches are more conscious than they had been for years of the unhappy heritage of enmity from which they were being delivered.

Christian converts and prospective converts from the higher castes have seen in the appeal to caste prejudice a disadvantage to themselves. A Reddi, who had been enrolled as an enquirer shortly before our interview with him, remarked that conversion means for him political disfranchisement, and continued: "As a Christian I will not be allowed to vote when my friends and neighbours are electing representatives from the area, but must vote, if at all, in a special electorate covering a wider area in which the result will probably be decided by the caste origin of the candidate." These and other opposing elements hinder but they cannot stop the unifying work of Christ. In one village the pastor and the lay leaders told us that the raising of the caste issue in the elections had proved a blessing in disguise, because the Church had refused to be divided by it and had conquered a danger to its Christian solidarity and integrity. In a second village we interviewed converts from eleven Hindu castes and from Islam and heard not a single complaint against any member of the local Church; all were agreed that old enmities have been conquered and one brotherhood established.

"What the Whole Country Needs"

But the most convincing evidence came out of this moving incident in a third village: The Brahman sub-divisional officer, who was cynical about the motives that move Hindus of the higher castes to become Christians, had accompanied us to the village and was questioning a group of recently baptized Reddis as to their reasons for uniting with the Church. One of the group had replied that Christ had shown

them their sins, made them penitent and changed their hearts. "And what were your sins?" questioned the Brahman. "Adultery and fighting, idolatry, sorcery and oppression of our brethren." came the answer. "Whom did you oppress?" "Our servants, these old Christians, whom we now love."

Just then 17 Moslems arrived with a request that an Urdu-speaking teacher be assigned to teach them. "Is it your purpose to be Christians?" we asked, "Yes," replied their leader, "We have seen how strife has ended in this village and masters and servants have been united in love. We want to be Christians, too. We have never seen anything like this before, and we believe that it is of God." The Brahman subdivisional officer remarked, "There is something here I do not understand. These people are certainly sincere. If this is Christianity I am for it. It's what the whole country needs."

CHAPTER VI

HE BUILDS HIS CHURCH

IT is often said, and rightly so, that while Christ attracts, the Church repels. In Chapter III we have referred to conditions in which the visible Church appears to hinder the process of Christ's conquest of the heart of India. Nevertheless, no fact emerges more clearly in this study than that Christ is building a Church in India which, by demonstrating His purpose and power, is commending His Gospel and promoting the progress of His Kingdom.

The heart of India seems to have hungered always for a religion of brotherhood and fellowship. With all of its power as the ruling faith and with all the genius it has commanded in its efforts to perpetuate caste distinctions for the protection of its Brahman administrators and their fellow-beneficiaries, Hinduism has been unable to remove this hunger from the heart of the nation. In every generation valiant men have proclaimed human brotherhood and protested against its denial in the institutions of religion. With the doors of the temples closed against a fifth of the population, proponents of brotherhood have repeatedly resorted to secret rites in which the prohibitions of inter-caste fellowship have been defied, but these, alas, have often degenerated into orgies. Two recent converts from Hinduism have told us how, in their search for fellowship, before they were drawn to Christ, they enlisted in inter-caste groups which, meeting under cover of darkness, engaged in secret rites that often

culminated in reckless carnal indulgences. Both, while now loathing the sensual practices into which they were led, aver that both the rites and their participation in them originated in a desire to apply the principles of brotherhood in relation to less-privileged fellows.

Right Relationships to God and Man

The conviction that a right relationship with God necessitates, or very soon produces, a right relationship with one's fellows lives near the heart of the Christian faith. When that conviction is given practical expression by Christian people it begets lively appreciation in the hearts of many observers. The sight of religion uniting men and women, rich and poor, high-caste and low-caste in one fellowship of brotherhood appeals to a deep instinct that has survived in the heart of the Hindu, despite the institution of caste and the concepts of *karma* and rebirth.

The Opportunity of the Church in Andhra Desa

The Church in Andhra Desa has an unrivalled opportunity to make that appeal to India. Its membership is now being expanded to include converts from every caste and class. All the major problems of human relationship within the village are being brought to the Church for solution. Will the Church in Andhra Desa commend Christ to the whole of India by solving those problems, and demonstrating right relationships of men with men as an evidence of right relationships with God? Has the Church begun to solve those problems? An answer to this last question was the chief object of our search in the weeks spent in the Andhra country.

Does Conversion Improve Social Attitudes?

"Has the conversion of these upper caste men and women improved their attitudes toward you?" we asked hundreds of Christians of out-caste origin. Without exception they replied affirmatively. Asked how the improved attitudes were expressed, many gave impressive replies. "They recognize now that we, too, are men and some of those who formerly oppressed us now treat us as blood brothers," said one grey-haired deacon. His nephew illuminated that comment as follows: "Do you recall the rich farmer with whom you talked this morning? Last year he kicked me three times because I complained that his cattle had damaged one of my crops. Then he became a Christian and came to our house to ask for forgiveness. And when a Brahman struck my mother last month because she didn't come to his house when sent for, although she explained that her baby was ill and she couldn't leave him, that farmer rebuked the Brahman and threatened to prosecute him, if he should ever mistreat any of us again."

Three Weighty Testimonies

A young man home for a few days from a nearby town where he was employed in a Government office made this statement:

"When I used to come home from the Mission Boarding School, the Reddis made me miserable by their taunts and curses and by compelling my mother and me to perform the most menial tasks for them. Now three of the leading Reddis are Christians and whenever I come home they invite me to their houses and show me every courtesy. Through their influence even the Hindu Reddis have become friendly."

A widow said, "When there were no Christians here except us Malas we had many troubles. Three times I was struck without cause, once my roof was burned, twice the crops were cut and taken away from my field, often I was abused and once a false case was filed against my son and me. But now there are many Christians among the higher caste people and we have no more trouble. They are kind to us. We worship together. We respect them and they protect us."

A shoe-maker was enthusiastic about the conversion of a prominent farmer of his village. "It used to be impossible to please that man. I worked for him for years and was always in trouble with him. He was frequently vicious. Then he became a Christian, and was completely changed. Last month I was ill and he came to see me. As he left he gave me a rupee to buy food."

"What A Question,"

A venerable woman, erect despite her reputed eighty-four years, her face as wrinkled as that many years could make it, but her eyes as bright as her great-granddaughter's; replied: "What a question! Where have you been living? Don't you know that the high-caste Hindus have always despised the out-castes? Well, these new Christians don't despise us, do they? Can't you see that they respect us? No one in this village despises us now. Even old Venkata, the landlord's agent has begun to address us respectfully. And why shouldn't he? We are not the bad, dirty, stupid people we used to be. We have changed and everybody knows it. Do we look like the Malas you see in villages where there is no Church, no school, no preacher?

We were like them before my husband first heard about Jesus and brought the missionary here to tell us. I remember that day as though it were yesterday. He was a wonderful man, that missionary! We were afraid to become Christians, but he and my husband argued with us and at last we all decided that they were right. Before long an evangelist came here to live and we were baptized. How angry the farmers were! They cursed us and threatened to kill the evangelist. Two of them beat my husband and his brother unmercifully. But we all held fast and after a while they cooled off." The old woman drifted among her memories of five decades and the interpreter was unable to follow her further, but we had learned enough. We understood her surprise that we should be enquiring whether the new converts to Christianity treated them better than they had formerly done, when we could see all about us evidence that something had happened to *them* that commanded respect. She had told us more about the changes Christ had wrought in her and in the whole community of former out-castes than of any change of attitude toward them by converts from the higher castes. But what could more eloquently witness to the work of Jesus Christ in uniting in one fellowship men and women whom a bad social system had arrayed against each other than the statement she had made?

Caste and Social Relations

However it must not be supposed that all the difficulties presented by the Hindu social system have been resolved. The problem of caste in relation to the Church is exceedingly complicated and difficult.

One of its phases is revealed by replies received to another question which we addressed to a few of the more cultured men and women from among Christians of Depressed Classes origin: "Do these new converts from the higher castes merge with you older Christians to form one social community?" It was extraordinarily difficult to obtain direct replies to that question: "They are kind to us, now." "They treat us like brothers, now", we would be told. But, eventually it became clear that in Andhra Desa, the new converts from the higher castes do not ordinarily merge with Christians from the Depressed Classes into one social community. Intermarriage is rare and is looked upon with disfavour by nearly all converts of higher caste origin. Inter-dining seldom occurs, except on the initiative of the missionary and even then much care has to be taken to prevent unhappy incidents.

In Andhra Desa meals are commonly served to guests on broad banana or plantain leaves and after the meal some member of the host's family removes the leaf. If servants are served each removes his own leaf. The removal of the leaf therefore becomes a test of social fellowship. A highly educated Christian layman, whose forefathers belonged to the Madiga community of out-castes, told us that on several occasions when he had eaten with Christians of higher caste origin he had been allowed to remove his leaf, while his fellow guests of higher caste ancestry made no effort to remove theirs. His feelings had been hurt, as he believed that his host should have stopped him from removing his leaf and would have done so had his ancestors belonged to one of the privileged castes. But when we questioned this layman to discover how

seriously he regarded his grievance, we learned that he classed it among life's petty annoyances and did not regard it as reflecting against the Christian integrity of his hosts. To quote his own words "In the Church we are on terms of absolute equality. My friends are true Christians. I love them and they love me. But they and I were prisoners of prejudice. Christ opened the prisons and set us free, but the poisoned air of the prisons is still in us. Our children are born free and they will not suffer as we still do, occasionally."

The question of intermarriage is very complicated and few are willing to discuss it freely. After several enquiries had led to excited feeling and argument, we dropped the subject. There is no doubt that many higher caste Hindus have been convinced of Christianity by what they have seen of Christ's power in the lives of converts from the Depressed Classes, regard those earlier Christians with respect and affection and treat them with great kindness, and yet regard them as a people so different from and inferior to themselves that the mere suggestion of intermarriage causes them involuntarily to shudder. The primary objection to inter-dining is the fear that if it should become common it would lead to intermarriage.

In our discussion of this subject with converts from the higher caste two considerations were almost invariably put forward by them; first that any social relations on their part with Christians of Depressed Classes origin would put an obstacle in the way of the conversion of their relatives and others in the higher castes, and, second, that the older Christians, converted from the Malas and the Madigas, had maintained their separate communities, and opposed social relations,

especially marriage, across their respective caste lines, so have no right to object if the new converts from the upper castes do the same.

Caste and the Ministry

An overwhelming majority of the ordained ministers of Andhra Desa is of Depressed Classes origin. This fact is well known, not only within the Church, but by the general public. Nearly all the Hindus and Moslems whom we interviewed could tell us the caste from which the local minister, or his ancestors, had entered the Church. The Church and the parsonage are both ordinarily located in or adjoining the area on the outskirts of the village where the depressed Malas and Madigas live. The identification of the ministers socially with the people they serve has been of incalculable advantage to the latter. As the ministers of the Church have won the respect of the higher caste Hindus of the village, the entire Church has been raised thereby in public esteem and in self-respect. Moreover the proximity of the ministers to their people has enabled them to minister much more effectively to the whole life of the Christians than they could possibly have done had they lived among the privileged classes in the village proper.

A Handicap Turned to an Advantage

In North India the ministers who serve village congregations of people converted from the Depressed Classes do not ordinarily live in the Depressed Classes quarters. It has been commonly supposed to be an advantage for the minister to live among the higher caste people within the village. The writer remembers

hearing a veteran missionary, twenty-five years ago, publicly rejoice that the last Christian minister evangelist, or school teacher, of his district, where Sweepers and Chamars had become Christians in large numbers, had, during the year, been removed from the quarters of the Depressed Classes.

In Andhra Desa it has not been possible, as in North India, to rent quarters for Christian workers in the sections where the higher castes live. We are persuaded that the Church in Andhra Desa has profited greatly by the necessity of having those who are appointed to lead the Christians of the village in the worship of God live with the Christians. It may have interfered with the ministers' initial approaches to the higher castes, but it has tended to direct attention to the work of Christ for the Depressed Classes, and that has proved to be the most effective presentation of Christ's Gospel to other classes.

We believe it has been good for the higher castes in the villages of Andhra Desa to receive the Gospel through the Depressed Classes and to have to go into the quarters which they have always wanted to avoid in order to learn more about the Christ.

Who Can Be Ministers?

No branch of the Church in Andhra Desa, so far as we know, has closed the door of its ministry against any one because of the caste from which he has emerged. But now that people of many castes are uniting with the Church it becomes necessary to devise ways and means of enlisting representatives of these new groups of converts in the ministry. The process has already been well started, and two dangers have become

apparent. Some of the older Christian groups are tempted to regard the ministry as their preserve and to place obstacles in the way of candidates from among the newer groups. Remembering their exclusion, not alone from the priesthood but from the temples of Hinduism, they are, not unnaturally, somewhat afraid of a ministry recruited from these converts who are just emerging from Hinduism. A second and, in our judgment, much more formidable danger is revealed in the claim being put forward by some ministers and unordained evangelists of higher caste origin that ministering to converts from the middle and higher castes should be recognized as the responsibility of men like themselves who have come from the higher castes.

The Menace of Self-Interest

On the closing day of a tour in the pastorate of a noble old minister of Madiga origin we united with him and his congregation in the Sabbath morning worship service. Besides the Christians of Depressed Classes origin, whose pastor he had been for more than a decade, there were present in the service, more than fifty converts from the higher castes, whom this veteran had received into the Church in the two years preceding our visit. Those fifty included converts from seven different castes, among them Komatis, Reddis and Kammas, the most influential castes of the area. While the service was in progress a group of 12 or 15 Telegas filed in, led by an evangelist of middle-caste origin. At the close of the service the evangelist presented the Telegas as enquirers who desired to be Christians, but who could not be served by a pastor of Depressed Classes origin. Enquiry made it quite clear that the

demand made in behalf of the Telegas originated in the mind of the evangelist who presented it. The evangelist was not dishonest; nor was he consciously perverse. He had convinced himself, by certain processes of rationalization, that ministers recruited from the former Depressed Classes are less effective in ministering to the higher classes than he and his upper caste colleagues and was imparting his opinion to the new enquirers and interpreting their apparent acquiescence as an independent confirmation of that opinion. We record this incident because it portrays more clearly than any other that came under our observation a danger against which the Church needs to protect itself. That the danger is real and imminent is made manifest by the fact that about four-fifths of the criticism of ministers of Depressed Classes origin heard during our study came from men of higher caste origin who are employed in the Church or Mission and from members of the latter's families. That self-interest had influenced their judgments was evident.

The Greatest Value in Christian Missions

A member of the often militantly anti-Christian Arya Samaj said to the writer in a village in West Godavari that the greatest value the Christian movement has brought to Andhra Desa is freedom for the minds and souls of women. He added, "A degenerate Hinduism had enslaved our women. They were condemned to illiteracy, idolatry, superstition, suffering, drudgery and dullness. The lovely things of life were all kept from them. Through Christian Missions the folly and the wrong of this treatment of our women has been convincingly demonstrated."

Christ's work for women in Andhra Desa, as for men, began in the ranks of the neediest and has spread to others of all castes and tribes. In one village of a thousand people we learned that only fourteen women could read, all had been taught by Christian teachers and eleven were from the Depressed Classes. Only four women had been attended in childbirth by a competent physician or midwife, all in a Mission Hospital. Only four houses had arrangements for cooking that enabled the smoke to escape without first damaging the eyes of the wife, or daughters, who did the cooking, and all had been installed on the suggestion of the pastor and his wife. In one area of four villages an examination of school registers showed girls of seventeen castes enrolled in schools taught by women whom Christ had raised from the Depressed Classes.

Christ's Service to Women in Andhra Desa

Early in this study we sat one day with 400 others in a temporary structure erected at the expense of a group of prosperous Hindu farmers for a series of evangelistic meetings. The most prominent Hindu of the village was in the chair. He introduced as the preacher of the afternoon an aged widow. For thirty-five minutes that preacher held the attention of her audience. Her sermon, in a language which the writer does not understand, was said to be logical, forceful and eloquent. At its close the chairman thanked her and remarked that times were changing when a Hindu audience would listen with interest, respect and profit to an address on religion delivered by a woman, and, especially, by one whose husband had died. He was

probably thinking, but was too courteous to add, "and most of all one who was born among the Depressed Classes?" Another Hindu said to the writer after the service, "What interested us most was her testimony. We know that she has experienced salvation. Her whole life is radiant with holiness." That widow standing before a mixed audience of men and women, Hindus, Moslems and Christians, as preacher and witness epitomizes the work of Christ for women who have received Him in hundreds of villages in Andhra Desa. He has opened the school room to them; so they can receive an education. He has opened the Church to them, so they can worship with the whole congregation of His people. He has opened the way for them to a personal experience of God, so they can bear witness to His love and to their salvation through the forgiveness of their sins. He has opened for them the doors of service, so they can enrich the life of the community.

A New Scale of Values for Women

These services of the Master to women has challenged many of the assumptions of Hinduism and have deeply influenced thinking in the villages. They are forcing a reconstruction of ideals and of religion. A young man, who, after two years in College, was back in his village home, told us of his struggle to adjust his thinking: "All that I was taught about the capacity of women for learning and culture was wrong. I want to remain a Hindu, but I want my wife to have the privileges the Christian women have and to be such a woman as the pastor's wife is. But when I suggest even so small a change as that my wife learn

to read, my mother becomes angry. Must my wife and I become Christians, or can we change Hinduism?"

Another young Hindu, a candidate for baptism, told a moving story of the process by which he had come to Christian faith. His wife had died and his parents proposed to arrange another marriage for him. He persuaded them to wait a while. He had recently become friendly with a young evangelist and had gone occasionally to the latter's home. There he met not only the evangelist's wife and daughter but other Christian women and girls. They dressed neatly, wore clean clothes, kept the house in order, read books and joined in discussing many issues about which the women of his past acquaintance knew nothing. He decided that he would never marry again unless he could have a wife of education and refinement like those Christian women. When he told his father what was in his mind the father replied: "That can never be! In our villages only the Christians and the prostitutes read and pay so much attention to their clothes and looks. And the Christians are untouchables! Will you marry a prostitute or an untouchable?" A few days later the young man learned that several girls of his own caste had become Christians and were in Boarding schools, and decided that he would become a Christian. The writer said so him: "You won't be much of a Christian if your only reason is to get a wife of the type you admire." "But, sir," he replied "the religion that produces this new type of womanhood must be better than the one that has left our village women in their present state of ignorance and superstition." "However" we replied "there are in India many thousands of educated Hindu

girls, as clean, attractive and wholesome as the Christian girls you know." "That may be true" he remarked "but I must judge by what I see in these villages."

Women as Pioneers of the Kingdom in their Communities

Ordinarily in Andhra Desa women have followed their husbands into the Church, but many instances came to our attention during the study where women first believed and then won their husbands to the faith. One woman, cured in a Mission Hospital of venereal disease that had cost the lives of five of her children, subsequently became the mother of two healthy children, and through repeated contacts with the hospital came to believe in Christ. Through her, not only her husband, but many of her neighbours have come to Christ.

In an out-of-the-way village in Guntur district we saw a remarkable demonstration of the influence which a Madiga woman, liberated, transformed and enriched by Christ Jesus, can exercise in a village. Mary, of Madiga parentage, spent four years in a Christian Boarding School before her marriage to a Christian school teacher. Two years after her marriage her husband died. She was then employed as a servant in the home of a farmer of liberal outlook. The farmer's twenty-one year old daughter was a virgin widow, having been married as a small girl and widowed before entering her teens. Mary taught the daughter, who was only two years younger than herself, to read, using the Bible as the text book. This opened a new world to the daughter and redeemed her life from sorrow and boredom. Christ became the centre of

her thought. The two young women studied the Word and prayed together in rich fellowship. The father and mother realized dimly what was happening, but in consideration of their daughter's new-found happiness did not interfere. However, after a few weeks the mother, who had always been very idolatrous, organized a spectacular service of idol worship and animal sacrifice. Viewing the procession, as a dozen goats and sheep were being led to the slaughter, the daughter was overcome by emotion and cried, out, "This is all wrong! I can't stand it! I won't remain a Hindu! I'll be a Christian from this day!"

Mary thought she would now be dismissed and sent home. The daughter determined to go with her. But when the father and mother came home the young women were surprised that nothing was said about sending Mary away. Instead, the daughter's declaration was quietly discussed, and the mother said, "You may be right, daughter. I'm trying the old way but my heart is very sad." In less than a month the mother, too confessed faith in Christ. Then the three women brought in the Baptist pastor from the quarters of the out-castes and with him made a covenant to pray for the husband's conversion. When we visited the village a year later the husband and some twenty neighbours, all of the influential Kamma caste, were zealous Christians, all products of the zeal of the servant girl and the two women whom she had brought to Christ. We witnessed the baptism of five others during our visit.

The pastor who ministers to this community, is, like Mary, of out-caste origin, but he is received in the homes of his high-caste parishioners with an affec-

tion never attained by the Brahman *purohits* whom he replaced. Yet in the home circles of these new believers he is not more honoured than is Mary, through whose loving service they were led to Christ.

Bible Women as Evangelists

More than anywhere else in India we have seen in Andhra Desa evidence of the success of paid Bible women in extending the Kingdom of Christ. In a town of some importance we interviewed nine recent converts of upper class Sudra families, all men. Five of these men testified that they and their families were won to Christ through the work of a Bible woman. Several of these men admitted that they had been strongly influenced by what they had seen of God's blessings being showered upon the Malas and Madigas who had become Christians, but they doubted if they would have turned to Christ but for the visits of the Bible women to their homes.

On the outskirts of another town we discovered a situation unique, so far as we know, in the whole of India. A Bible woman had developed a Women's Church and was conducting regular services of worship for her congregation twice weekly. A man had been called in to baptize the converts and to administer the Holy Communion; all other pastoral services the Bible woman gave. The explanation was that the husbands of these women refused to become Christians but did not object to their worship, or baptism, so long as they did not associate themselves publicly with the older Christians, gathered from the Depressed Classes. These women told us that they are working for the conversion of their husbands and in the meantime are

bringing up their children as Christians, and that they are eagerly awaiting the day when, with their husband's consent, they can worship in the Church with the whole congregation of His people.

So Christ is building His Church, uniting men and women, rich and poor, high-caste and low-caste. Within that Church there are divisions and problems of relationship, but there is also a deep conviction that God wills understanding and fellowship. And on every hand the thoughtful observer finds evidence that the unifying work of Christ is in progress.

CHAPTER VII

THE HELP OF HIS FRIENDS

A cardinal purpose of this study is to discover how the friends and servants of Christ, directly, and through the organized work of Churches and Missions, can improve and enlarge the help they give to his effort to win the love and allegiance of India. That he relies upon the help of men and women who know and love him is apparent. It is as clear to the student of the progress of Christ's kingdom in modern India as it was to the author of the epistle to the Romans that men do not call upon him in whom they have not believed and do not believe in him of whom they have not heard and do not hear until some one brings the good news to their attention and that to the end that they may hear it is needful to send preachers to them. There are few areas of any size whatever in India into which no knowledge of Jesus Christ has penetrated. Through contact with Christian officials, knowledge of the English language, visits by some of their number to areas where Christians live, or by some other of the scores of ways by which information, correct or garbled, spreads among men, nearly, if not quite, every village community must have learned something about Christ or Christianity. But one looks in vain for evidence that communities are brought to Christian discipleship, or to the joyous realization of the Saviourhood of Christ, by any process apart from the service of his friends. The situations in which his sovereignty is most widely acknowledged, and the transforming and

enriching quality of his rule in the human heart is most convincingly demonstrated have arisen in response to the service of hosts of his friends in and out of India. For example, in Guntur District more than a thousand school teachers and as many, or more, pastors, evangelists, Bible readers, doctors and nurses, all sons and daughters of India, and 63 missionaries from Churches in the West are helping in the work by which Christ is uplifting and transforming the Depressed Classes and drawing thousands of new converts to his side every year. And these salaried servants of the Church are vastly out-numbered by those in the District and in far countries, mainly distant America, who contribute of their time, strength and money to maintain in the District the Schools, Hospitals, Churches, home visitation, open-air preaching, printing presses and other agencies through which he ministers and is revealed.

Their Need for Continuous Study

That the friends of Christ cannot do their best for him without continuous study and constant endeavour to improve their service is also apparent. From the records assembled during this study we must conclude that zealous and devoted missionaries have often failed to help Christ win the heart of India, and have actually made his task more difficult, because they had not learned lessons that the experience of their predecessors had made available for them. Many movements toward Christ seem to have been arrested by missionary policies based upon misunderstanding and incorrect reasoning. Not only so but much of the antagonism that bars the way for Christ into the hearts of many of India's people results from actions taken by earnest Christian men and women under the impres-

sion that they were thereby helping Christ. Wisdom demands that all assumptions upon which Mission work in India is conducted should be subjected to examination in the light of the widest possible relevant experience in India. While the dangers that inhere in frequent changes of policy and programme are especially grave in India, where custom is so highly esteemed, the perils that lurk in an unthinking use of inferior or harmful methods of work are even graver.

Mission Policies That Hinder Progress

Among the formidable barriers to Christ's progress in India appear to be several policies that are widely accepted by Missions and apparently not often seriously questioned. Chief of these appear to be (1) the policy of founding separate and exclusive Churches, instead of uniting with other Missions in a given area to found one inclusive Church, (2) the policy of using available resources to occupy as wide an area as possible instead of using them to respond to definite enquiry, to enlarge and deepen existing interest or to reinforce movements toward Christ, (3) the policy of buying or building property, thus binding the working force to certain locations, before the areas of major responsibility and opportunity have been determined by the response of groups of people to the working of God's spirit, and (4) the policy of separating new converts from old associates for their indoctrination or protection, and of separating pastors from the people of their congregations.

The Barrier of Denominational Competition

How denominational competition arrests the progress of Christ's kingdom is revealed in the records of

many areas. We relate but one of many distressful stories that have come to our attention. In a group of villages a few miles south of Calcutta a Christward movement of wide dimensions and extraordinary power took place over a hundred years ago. Under the ministry of a Congregational missionary three men were converted, one of whom possessed much strength of character, considerable property and wide influence. Some time after their conversion this leader became convinced that they should demolish a temple which had been built by one of his ancestors on land which he now owned and which had been maintained for a number of years at his expense. The missionary urged caution, but the three men announced that on a certain morning they would tear down the temple. They spent the whole of the preceding night in prayer. In the morning emerging from the leader's house they found hundreds of men there armed with clubs and determined to protect the temple. But in some strange way the crowd was restrained from action. The men walked through to the temple without interference of any sort, entered and removing the idol, smashed it before the horrified eyes of the crowd, who momentarily expected the "god" to strike them dead in punishment for the "sacrilege." When this did not happen, and the men proceeded to smash the pedestal upon which the idol had sat, and then to demolish the temple, many were convinced of the truth of the religion their neighbours had professed and some immediately cried out "victory to the Lord Jesus." Within a year hundreds confessed their faith in Christ. A wonderful revival occurred. The converts carried the good news of Christ to rela-

tives and friends and a Church of wondrous promise was born.

Then zealous Christian missionaries of the Anglican communion, learning of the great movement, came in with a staff of preachers and told the converts that, while they were doing well in becoming Christians, the ministers who were serving them were not properly ordained. Some of the converts joined the new arrivals.

A little later the Baptists entered with the declaration that the converts had not received the right kind of baptism and should now be immersed. Then followed the Roman Catholics contending that they were the only true Church of Christ. All of these later arrivals brought pastors and evangelists supported by foreign funds, who relieved the converts of the responsibility of maintaining worship and extending the kingdom, and the movement was completely stopped. Since then only an occasional convert has been won from Hinduism. Fifty years after that tragedy was enacted the Methodist Episcopal Church also entered the area. To-day approximately half of the Christians of the area are Roman Catholics. The Methodists have withdrawn and the Baptists and Congregationalists have made a territorial agreement. But the barriers have not all been removed yet, and there has been no recurrence of the triumphal advance of the early years.

Aggressive competition between non-Roman Churches diminished rapidly during the 19th century and in 1912 most of the larger and more substantial Missions joined in adopting comity rules, which effectively bar the recurrence of such a tragedy as the fore-

going story records, and in organizing the National Missionary Council, which has since become the National Christian Council. However, no agreements between the Roman and the non-Roman Churches have been effected and in recent years the Roman Church, through many missions from many lands, has entered numerous areas where it was not previously represented and has launched intensive drives to take to itself the converts of other Churches.

Certain non-Roman Churches, also, have declined to accept the comity rules and have entered areas in which other Churches were at work and set up rival organizations. Outstanding among these are the Salvation Army, the Missiouri Lutherans and the Seventh Day Adventists.

A considerable number of independent and semi-independent Missions is found scattered over India, some of them in areas in which older Missions are engaged in fruitful work and are in urgent need of reinforcements. If the thought of organizing separate Churches, thus dividing the Church of Christ locally, could be expunged from the minds of the missionaries and their supporters, so that the resources of the Missions could be spent in co-operation with the Church already established in the area, the gain would be immeasurably greater than is possible under conditions of rivalry and competition.

How Zeal for Occupying Territory Blocks Progress

The greatest delusion in connection with Christian Missions in India is, we suspect, that occupying territory is of itself a service to Christ's cause. It is

clear that the influence of that belief upon the distribution of the personnel of Missions has deprived scores of thousands of enquirers of the leadership and instruction which they have needed to bring them to an experience of God in Jesus Christ. In one area we heard a missionary praise one of his predecessors for the "statesmanship" with which he occupied the District. "He put a preacher and a school teacher in every important town and in a dozen of the largest villages of the area and, despite great pressure to change them, maintained his arrangements for thirty years." That sounded fine, but looking into the records we found that at least three promising movements toward Christ had been neglected and had come to naught, while that missionary had continued to "occupy" the "important" places. The mass movements that have produced at least 85 per cent of the non-Roman and 60 per cent of the Roman Catholic Christians of India have developed where the ideal of occupation of territory was not allowed to keep preachers and teachers away from those who asked for their help. Ringeltaube in South Travancore and Darling in Kistna are examples of superintending ministers who located their forces, themselves included, where men and women indicated a desire to follow Christ, without regard to considerations of religious imperialism that would have made them occupy territory in the name of their Missions. In every part of India to which our studies have taken us we have found indications of movements toward Christ, which in their beginnings seem to have been as promising as those with which Ringeltaube and Darling were associated, which were not adequately supported and came to an

early end, while the men and women who might have developed them occupied adjacent territory. All of the great mass movements from which the Christian Church in India has in the main developed have begun and attained their strength in rural areas, while in the regions where the Church is non-existent or tragically weak, the personnel of Missions has to an overwhelming extent been concentrated in cities and towns. In one region we found that all of the preachers were in towns or villages where there are hospitals and post offices, and excluding the preachers and their families, ninety-two per cent of the Christians were in villages where neither of these facilities was available. The movement toward Christ had been arrested and was beginning to recede. The friends of Christ were staying in the centers, not entirely because they were more pleasant places in which to live, but partly because they felt they must occupy these "important places." "Why do you live here when practically all the Christians to whom you minister live from four to ten miles to the south. Why don't you go out there to live?" we asked an ordained Indian minister. "We are trying to get another minister for those villages" he answered. "We can't abandon this station where the Mission has worked forty years." "But why not take care of the Christian community and visit this station, instead of taking care of the station and visiting the Christians?" we asked. After a full minute of quiet, he replied, "I hadn't thought of that."

One Mission in tribal territory, confronted for two years by a movement that has brought thirty thousand people into the Church, has maintained the distribution of its forces practically unchanged, while the new

converts are left with pitifully inadequate instruction and leadership and with no provision for training ministerial and lay leaders from their own ranks. We do not doubt that in this case an adjustment of forces will be made, but the delay already incurred may have tragic results.

The Barrier of Property

Possibly the possession of property is as responsible as the cause we have just discussed for depriving Missions of the mobility necessary to serve the cause of Christ with the highest effectiveness. The location of a residence may keep a missionary or an Indian pastor away from the people with whom his chief opportunities and responsibilities dwell. It has often done so. After the conversion of Venkayya, the robber chief, and several of his associates, Darling left his bungalow at Bezwada and built a new one at Raghavapuram by the side of the homes of the new converts. But in similar circumstances scores of other missionaries have continued to live where the Mission had located their residences and have made but an occasional visit to the new converts. The pioneers in every Christian movement in India meet difficulties more numerous and severe than do most of those who follow them and their need for help is the most urgent to which the missionary, or other friend of Christ, may be called to minister. An amount and quality of attention is necessary then that later groups of converts do not require.

The founding of institutions in an area before a Church is established there seems to be a grave mistake. It is significant that several of the areas most richly served by Mission institutions are among those

where the Church has been least successful in winning converts. The presence of a congregation of imported people sometimes obscures the meagreness of local success and endeavour. Dangers arise not only from the absorption by the institutions of the resources that are required for building a Church, but much more from the concept of Christianity thereby established in the public mind as a religion professed for the sake of obtaining service from institutions. In the area provided with more institutions in relation to the size of the Christian community than any other visited during our study we found ministers and lay volunteers presenting the Gospel entirely in terms of service rendered by the Missions. Quite the most fruitful institutions studied during these years were established to meet needs of the growing Church in mass movement areas. It is calamitous that institutions badly needed in several such areas have not been established because property acquired elsewhere and institutions not essential to the Church's needs are absorbing Mission resources.

The Separation Theory

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman puts into three measures of meal until it leavens the whole. In view of his teaching it is surprising to discover to what extent mission policies in India have separated converts from their relatives and communities. The compound system, once a prime favourite with Missions and not entirely abandoned yet, has produced a vast amount of antagonism against Christianity and has blocked the channels by which the grace of Christ might have reached a multitude of hearts. The idea of the system was that Christians

should be protected from the evil influences of Hindu or Moslem society and indoctrinated with Christian teaching. Its results, however, were to deprive those whom it was intended to help of the support to good living which their communities had developed and to which they had been accustomed, to place them in a strange environment where normal social life and fellowship were extremely difficult to obtain, to foster dependence upon the Mission and to sacrifice their opportunities for effective witnessing to Christ before the people who would have been most interested in their spiritual discoveries and experience. While the compound system no longer holds the power it once held in Mission policies, the extraction of converts from their communities continues and is in many areas almost as effective a barrier to Christ's progress toward the heart of India as it ever was. During these years of investigation we have been in several areas where the only converts ever won had immediately left their villages and most of them had been given employment by the Missions. As a result the expectation had been established that new converts would, as a matter of course, leave their villages and people who were firmly attached to their homes were not regarded as susceptible to conversion.

Hardly less damaging to the Church has been the disposition to separate the ministry from the rank and file of the lay membership. We met at least a dozen ordained ministers who with no apparent sense of the incongruousness of their position admitted that they would not eat in the home of a single member of the Churches they were supposed to serve. They lived in the caste quarters of their villages while the Christians whom

they were appointed to shepherd lived among the Depressed Classes. The situation would not have been so patently wrong had it not been that the preparation of several of those men for the ministry had separated them from the Depressed Classes among whom they had been born, and had left them with little sense of a community of interest with their underprivileged fellow Christians. When men known to have come from among them and holding appointment as their ministers of religion, keep aloof from them, declining to eat with them, to live among them and to share their reproaches and disabilities, the lay Christians grow resentful and lose interest in Christianity. We have not in the whole of this study found an instance of a rural Church prospering under the ministry of men who refused to identify themselves socially with their people.

Barriers Due to Personal Errors

Another series of barriers is related less to Mission policies than to errors of judgment or of conduct by individuals. Any attempt to catalogue such errors here would be unprofitable, but by way of illustration several observations may be recorded. In one area where intense antagonism to Christianity prevailed, we learned that some years past a missionary of a Church more noted for aggression than for constructive service baptized several families of an Untouchable caste. On complaint of these families he spent large sums of money fighting court cases against landlords, merchants and others accused of oppressing them. Trivial incidents were magnified into major crimes. Then the missionary discovered that several of the

men continued to use tobacco, contrary to his teaching, and he refused to have anything more to do with them. One of the landlords said "He took us to court because my son, under great provocation, slapped an impudent servant, but he abandoned these people, closed their school, withdrew their preacher and left them to the mercy of their foes because they didn't agree with him that smoking is a sin." One of those who had been baptized and had recanted said: "We trusted him until he got everybody against us, then he left us. We had to pay over a hundred rupees to get back into caste."

In a village of another area we found strong opposition to Christianity because the superintending missionary had insisted that several marriages performed before the persons concerned or any of their families had become Christians should not be consummated and because children sent to the Mission Boarding Schools had not been allowed to return to their homes during the summer vacation. That missionary, no doubt, thought he was doing right by denying the validity of Hindu child marriages and by protecting Christian children from the evil surroundings of their homes, but he outraged the senses of ethics and propriety in the village, caused intense antagonism to Christianity and probably did more harm than good to the children.

The Awakening and Hunger

The opportunities and responsibilities of the friends of Jesus in India are immensely increased by the awakening that is taking place among the Depressed Classes, the aboriginal tribes and other underprivileged communities. More numerous and larger groups than

ever before are enquiring concerning Christ. A few weeks ago the writer was in a service of worship and counsel attended by some seven hundred people. Approximately three hundred were Christians with several years of experience in the Church. About two hundred had been baptized on confession of faith within the three months preceding. The remainder with a few exceptions were members of the Depressed Classes. An opportunity was given for discussion. Many Christians arose one after another to bear witness concerning Christ. Then a man of the Depressed Classes arose and said that he and his associates were glad to see the happiness of the Christians and would like to share it, but would need instruction about what to believe, how to worship and how to live and would need some one to teach them and their children to read. That started an avalanche. Within ten minutes verbal petitions for instruction in the Christian faith and way of life had descended upon that body of Christian men and women from the representatives of 26 groups aggregating more than two thousand people. In another area more than six hundred miles away we sat two weeks later in a meeting attended by 150 representatives of one of the most cruelly oppressed castes in India, and listened to the reading of an address. These men recited the oppressions inflicted upon their ancestors "for a hundred generations since Hinduism came to power in our land" and upon themselves "though gradually lessened since Christianity has come to our help" and declared that they were convinced that Christ alone could meet their needs. In a subsequent discussion every non-Christian present asked to be enrolled as a Christian

in preparation for baptism and Church membership. Then the entire group voted unanimously to conduct a campaign at their own expense to make every member of the caste in the entire Civil District a Christian within 18 months.

The writing of this chapter has been interrupted to respond to a plea to meet a group of leaders of the Depressed Classes in a nearby District. These men, 80 in number, heard with obvious joy what Christ is doing in many parts of India and issued a call for a meeting of two thousand leaders of their caste to consider the call of Christ to their people. One of their number said "I became interested in Christianity through politics, but now I am concerned about the spiritual side of religion. Seeing how desperately the Hindus feared Christianity I thought it was an unconscious tribute from them to that religion. They knew that if we should become Christians they could not keep us in slavery much longer. So I began to study Christianity. Now I realize that our need is not to join another community but to experience a change within ourselves. My interest in politics is subsiding but my interest in religion is growing."

Another interruption during the writing of the preceding pages of this chapter was a visit from an officer of the All-India Depressed Classes Conference. He said "We are awaking, not from a healthy sleep, but from unconsciousness caused by the brutalities perpetrated upon us. We are learning the teaching of Hinduism about ourselves and we know we can never respect the Hindu religion. Nor can we live without religion. We are hungry. We want a better life—the best there is for us. Will you Christians, who have achieved a

better life and apparently have what we are hungry for, help us, or are you going to leave us to the mercy of our oppressors?" His plea, made several times in the last two years, is "Send a hundred of our picked young men to College, train a thousand of our men to teach school and begin Christian work in ten thousand new villages every year. We will all become Christians and you won't have to continue helping us indefinitely. We'll be as prosperous as other communities in India when we have been Christians for a generation or two. Help us now and in the years to come we'll help all India.

A Recent Speech by Dr. Ambedkar

By general consent one of the ablest, and, in the writer's opinion, one of the best, of India's political leaders is Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, leader of the Independent Labour Party in the Bombay Legislative Assembly, Principal of the Government Law College, Bombay and spokesman for the Depressed Classes in the Round Table Conferences held in London during the preparation of the new constitutions for Federal India and the provinces. It was under his leadership, and in response to his long-planned and eloquent advocacy, that the Yeola Conference of the Mahars and Mangs of Western India adopted their memorable resolution renouncing the Hindu religion and calling upon the Depressed Classes in every part of India to organize a mass exodus from Hinduism and search for a satisfying faith. Many Christians, allowing themselves to be influenced overmuch by the vilification of him in which many resentful Hindus have indulged, have supposed that his effort was begotten by political in-

trigue and bore no legitimate relation to religious scruple or conviction. It has been widely reported that having frightened the Hindus into the promise of better treatment Dr. Ambedkar and his associates will drop their proposal to forsake Hinduism.

Last month Dr. Ambedkar made an address at Bandra, a suburb of Bombay City, that shows how unfair to him and his associates such talk is. He called upon his audience and all who are treated as out-castes to observe no more Hindu festivals or religious rites of any sort, and proceeded with an indictment of Hinduism so plain-spoken that no non-Indian would be wise to quote it. This time his words were directed not to social oppression or economic slavery but to moral and ethical considerations. He denounced the moral character of several of the Hindu gods, illustrating his points by quotations from the sacred books of Hinduism, and asked how the Depressed Classes or any one else could achieve moral freedom and spiritual regeneration through a religion that held up such utterly licentious beings for worship. No Christian minister could have been more insistent than Dr. Ambedkar was that the true God is the embodiment of stainless purity and He alone is worthy of worship. His address closed with the assurance that on no account would he turn back from his deep resolve and with the earnest plea that his brethren think the whole question out in all of its bearings and choose their new faith after a full testing of the truth of things. Can any one doubt that this augurs well for a heavy increase of the Church's opportunity or that it places upon the friends of Christ in India an added responsibility?

To repeat the known mistakes of the past in the situation now developing would be inexcusable. If the friends of Christ will unite to make the building of the Kingdom of God their sole concern, holding competitive denominationalism in contempt; if they will abjure preference for the higher castes and boldly and with great rejoicing receive into their fellowship the poor and despised upon whom the Spirit of God is moving; if they will recognize the values that inhere in group movements, welcome and encourage group decisions to follow Christ and adapt their programmes to the service of groups rather than to the detachment and culture of individuals; if they will resolutely stop the production of self-centered Christians who consider themselves as owners of a vested interest in Christian Missions and propagate among their countrymen the idea that to become a Christian is to renounce one's family, community and culture and forfeit one's self-respect for the sake of a share in Mission income; if they will keep the preaching of the Gospel and the worship of God at the center of their programme as constituting the chief good of man, and as giving the highest meaning and richest value to all of life; if they will continue to assemble the lessons of experience now locked in denominational and geographical compartments, and to interpret and apply them in all of their work; it seems clear that in this generation a very large number of the people of India will welcome Christ to their hearts as Lord and Saviour.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

IN this final chapter we return to Andhra Desa and those movements which were the first subject of enquiry after the publication of *Christian Mass Movements in India*. No other area presents a situation so encouraging from the point of view of the eventual rule of Christ in India. Nowhere else in contemporary life do we find so much information on how friends of Christ can prepare his way and make his paths straight in India. And nowhere is it more important that the lessons of experience in the service of Christ in India should be understood and applied.

Primary Importance of Remaining Groups of the Depressed Classes

Since the first observation to be made in the many new movements to Christ in Andhra Desa is that they have all resulted from earlier movements among the Depressed Classes, and since this observation is fully confirmed by thorough investigation, *our first recommendation is that every possible effort be made to win all remaining groups of the Depressed Classes to Christ*. Although the case for this recommendation is clear and compelling, we consider that there is grave danger that it will not be implemented. There is a disposition to neglect the Depressed Classes whenever hope is entertained that the higher castes may be induced to respond. To do so now would be both a capital folly and a grievous wrong.

There is strong reason to believe that the surest way of multiplying conversions of higher caste Hindus is to increase the scale on which the transforming, enriching and uplifting grace of Christ is demonstrated in the Depressed Classes. And one certain way to arrest the movements of the higher castes to Christ is to turn away from the poor and the despised to those of better estate.

Less than forty per cent of the Depressed Classes of Andhra Desa have become Christians. It has taken approximately 80 years since the beginning of group movements among the Malas and Madigas to win a million of them to Christ. But it is highly probable that an effort worthy of the present opportunity would add another million in the next ten years. Such an effort maintained with due regard for quality would mightily reinforce the appeal that is now drawing thousands of higher caste Hindus to the Saviour.

Urgent Calls from Unoccupied Villages

There are many areas in Andhra Desa where no sustained presentation of the Gospel has yet been attempted. In some of these areas groups of the Depressed Classes, having learned something from converted relatives or itinerant evangelists have expressed a desire to learn more and to follow Christ. This fact constitutes an urgent call to the Churches of adjacent areas, to Missions and Mission Boards and to all Christians who are able to stand behind and aid those agencies, to provide the instruction, fellowship and leadership in worship necessary to bring these groups to an experience of Christ and the aid in education necessary to enable them to realize their

heritage in him. The need is urgent. Literally scores of examples of this kind have come to our attention: An Indian minister who represents in Andhra Desa an older Church further South writes, "We have 10 villages with Christian congregations, and ~~there~~ *three* with catachumens preparing for baptism, while groups are asking for instruction in eight other villages that lie beyond our reach. The Moslems and the Arya Samajists have come in and are trying to capture these groups and others beyond them in the areas to which we are unable to extend our labours. All of the Madigas of two villages have become Moslems." Another Indian minister writes, "Four times in the last three years the Madigas of a certain village seven miles away have asked me to send them an evangelist. But when I went to their village last week I found an Arya Samajist teaching a school for them. He has taught them that Christ was an illegitimate Jew and that Christians are people who have lost their caste and defiled themselves by eating beef and drinking whisky. We have lost our opportunity in that village. Please help us to secure reinforcements so that we may not lose the other village groups that now are calling us."

In a week of witness in one rural area last month, October 1937, more than five thousand of the Depressed Classes and over two thousand caste Hindus declared their desire to be enrolled as Christian believers. A missionary reports calls from forty-four villages; another tells of thousands eager to be taught, baptized and organized into Churches, and tens of thousands vaguely interested and in a mood to respond if the Gospel were preached to them.

Where a Change of Attitude is Necessary

In sharp contrast to the above there are other areas in Andhra Desa where Missions have long maintained evangelists who have either ignored the Depressed Classes altogether or have pursued methods of work that have left the masses of them unevangelized. In all such areas a change of attitude or of programme is imperative. What may be accomplished by a change of attitude is illustrated by the experience of a missionary. He came to India with a strong bias against group movements. Association with high-caste Hindus led him to view with suspicion the confession of conversion by any members of the Depressed Classes. *Christian Mass Movements in India* led him to investigate. His attitude changed. He invited the Depressed Classes of his neighbourhood to come to Christ. They were interested at once and after a few months of work with them this missionary saw more than fifty of them baptized and organized into a Christian congregation. Since then others have joined them. The power of Christ to effect fundamental changes in character and personality has been convincingly demonstrated. That missionary's own experience of God has been wonderfully enriched and deepened through fellowship with these new converts.

A young school teacher only two years out of high school has written to us as follows: "Although my own family has come from among the Madigas I have been very skeptical of the spiritual capacity of all Untouchables. I have been teaching a Mission School but had not tried to bring any one to Christ, except two high-caste boys who are my friends, until last

month when I realized my sins of pride and neglect. Now I am talking every day to Madigas and Malas and many of them are very interested. Five have given up toddy drinking and several come to my house for prayer every evening. Yesterday they told me that they and all of their relatives and neighbours will be Christians within a year."

Where the Church Consists of One Caste Only

Areas of a third kind are very common. In them many members of one of the major castes of the Depressed Classes have become Christians while the other caste is as yet unrepresented in the Church. For example, in one area typical group movements have brought thousands of Malas to Christ; but the Madigas have made no move away from the old life. In an adjoining area thousands of Madigas have entered the Church and the Malas have made no move. These situations are highly dangerous. A minister who comes from the Malas and serves a Church entirely recruited from that caste solemnly assured the writer that the Madigas have no capacity for understanding religion, while Malas are highly religious by nature. Less than a month later a Madiga teacher in an area where only Madigas are Christians made almost exactly the same statement with the roles reversed. It is worthy of note that the higher-castes are much more appreciative of Christianity where Malas and Madigas are united in the fellowship of the Church than where one group alone has become Christian. Wherever the Church is composed of converts from only one caste of the Depressed Classes the first step toward winning the

entire population should be the evangelization of the other caste or castes of the Depressed Classes.

Reproducing Conditions that Encourage Conversion of Higher Castes.

II The next observation in Andhra Desa is that the new group movements of caste Hindus are limited to a few areas and are associated with certain conditions that are recognizable and definable. We therefore recommend that efforts be made to encourage similar movements in every part of the territory by reproducing throughout Andhra Desa the conditions that seem to have contributed to the growth of the present movements. What are those conditions? First, unquestionably, is the development of genuine religious experience within the Church. The quality of its spiritual life appears to determine the measure of the influence which the Church exerts upon its neighbours. It should be understood that by "the Church" is meant here the brotherhood of those *local* people who profess the Christian faith. Whatever may be said in favour of abolishing the distinction between Church and Mission, public opinion in the village commonly distinguishes between Christians who come from without to preach, teach or administer and those who belong to the village. No matter how strong may be the personal influence in the village of the minister brought in from outside, no matter how rich may be his personality, how eloquent his speech, how fervent his spirit, or how radiant with the beauty of holiness his day-by-day life, he lacks two advantages possessed by converted groups of local people. He

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 101

is a detached individual ministering among people thoroughly integrated in groups and accustomed to group control. Looking at him the people of the village do not easily imagine themselves enjoying the sort of experience to which he bears witness. Nor did the village community know him before Christ came into his life; it cannot therefore, estimate what he owes to Christ. A change in the character and conduct of groups of people, recognized as due to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ, is incomparably the most effective recommendation of the Gospel of Christ to typical village folk.

The head man of a village where seven families of Kammas, four families of Reddis, and a number of shepherds, goldsmiths and others have been converted put this fact in these words, "We met many missionaries and Indian ministers who came here preaching, and although we recognized them as good men, we were not influenced by what they said or did, but when the Depressed Classes of our village who for years had been nominal Christians began to exhibit godly characteristics we became interested at once. We knew that they had acquired a genuine religious experience, and we understood that Christianity had some meaning for us." Another village head man who had recently been converted along with twenty other members of his caste said, "You could never have won me to Christ. I know now that all men are brothers but I am a village man and had to see Christ in village men before I could become a Christian. One group of Christians I know repelled me. It made me think Christianity to be like all the other religions, weak and corrupt. But

this other group proved that Christ changes people. Irreligious, timid, lazy men and women became worshipful, courageous and alert. Animals became men. This made me love Jesus Christ." A Kamma woman who at the time of our interview had not yet made a public confession of faith said, "I'll tell you what makes us accept Christ. We see him working in the lives of people we know. The Mala women here were always sad but now some of them are always happy. My aunt went all the way to Benares to get a religious experience like that, and when she came back without it, she was so disappointed she died in a few months. I know these Mala women have really experienced God."

The Invitation Must be Extended

Another condition within the Church associated with these new movements to Christ is a sense of mission to the whole population. This sense of mission is expressed in an eager effort to win others to Christ. It is also often expressed in terms of service. New converts enter the Church in response to a definite invitation. In several areas we found all conditions favourable to the conversion of higher caste Hindus and Moslems, except that the Church was not extending the invitation. We enquired of an ordained minister how many Moslems had been converted under his ministry and he replied that he had never even asked the Moslems to become Christians. The next day in one of his villages a Moslem told us that he is a convinced disciple of Christ and expects to be baptized some day. In another area we discovered that a Moslem head man of a village was

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 103

wondering why the Christians who were so friendly with him did not ask him to accept Christ. He was asked a few days later and has become a zealous Christian. We are persuaded that a fervent evangelistic effort conducted with faith and wisdom throughout Andhra Desa, by ministers and laymen, would induce in many localities movements to Christ comparable to those now prevailing in the few areas of which we have written. Incidentally, it is clear that all forms of service rendered in Christ's name are more potent in producing appreciation of Christ when they come from local groups of Christians. A Mission is an institution. A school maintained by a Mission may be viewed as impersonally as a rail road, but a school maintained by a group of local people not previously interested in education nor associated with any form of public service excites many personal questions and emotions. One remark often heard in our survey was, "Those whom we have despised have become our teachers and ministers of religion." In an area where several schools are run by local Christians without Mission help an ex-soldier said, "The Christians are almost the poorest people here but they do more public service than all others combined. We are asking why they do it. They have been badly treated by everybody and they are making everybody ashamed now."

I How Cleanliness Proclaims the Evangel.

The third observation is that the increased cleanliness of Christians is strongly influencing public opinion in favour of Christianity. We recommend that advantage be taken of this fact and increased

attention be given to the teaching of habits of cleanliness. The custom of wearing clean clothes to the house of God generally follows closely upon the establishment of orderliness and reverence in worship. In this the example of the families of the pastor and the teacher is very potent. The quarters of the Depressed Classes, especially those of the Madigas, have been notoriously filthy. In some villages a generation or less of experience as Christians has effected so much improvement that those same quarters are now cleaner than the quarters of the highest castes. Such conspicuous improvement is a mighty aid to evangelism. In one village it was directly responsible for the conversion of an influential landlord. In another village it led to such greatly improved relations between the Christians and the higher castes that a Hindu Aided School was closed and all the children were sent to the Christian School.

In this connection we recommend that efforts made by Christian agencies to improve sanitary conditions in the villages begin with the quarters of the Christians, and be extended into other quarters as a project of the local Christian community. In no way can Christians promote sanitation more effectively than in making the quarters of a people once noted for their insanitary surroundings a model for all classes. The removal of manure pits from the neighbourhood of their houses, the cleaning out of wells and their protection from contamination, the construction of drains and the leveling of roads in their sections of the village, reinforce the Christians' consciousness of their new character as Christians and aid them in overcoming the handicap of Depressed Classes men-

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 105

talities. These things also proclaim to all classes in the village that a radical change has been wrought in the Christians. It is within the power of the Church in Andhra Desa to do these things in every village where there are Christians and by doing them to strengthen the appeal of Christ to multitudes who await leadership in this realm that is vastly important to the public welfare.

Especially Responsive Castes.

The fourth observation is that several castes are strongly represented among the converts in each of the chief areas of the new movements to Christ. We recommend that persistent approaches be made to those castes everywhere. The news that their people are becoming Christians has spread far and wide within the castes concerned and has created enough interest to insure a respectful hearing of the Gospel by most groups of members of those castes. As an example we may take the Waddaras. They are a large caste spread over most of the Andhra country. At least seven thousand have become Christians. Probably ten thousand others have already manifested interest in Christ. Many of them are nomadic and such groups present formidable difficulties. But numerous groups are settled in villages where there are Churches and Schools with pastors and teachers who can extend their respective ministries to them: Economically and socially the Waddaras are not far removed from the Depressed Classes, though they are accounted a clean caste: Except where regarded as criminally inclined, they are commonly allowed to reside in the village and they have access to village wells.

The Yerukulas and the Yanadis, two low Sudra castes, socially about on a par with the Waddaras, but economically definitely superior, are less numerous and not so widely spread. They, too, are readily accessible and very responsive to the Gospel. In some areas they have come *en masse* to Christian faith and considerable numbers of them are giving an excellent account of themselves as Christians.

The Reddis and the Kammas are the dominant castes in many villages. They own a large portion of the land and many are prosperous. Several hundred members of these castes in Guntur and Kistna Districts of British India and in adjoining areas of the Nizam's Dominions have been baptized. Thousands are friendly to Christianity. They are less prone to group action than are the other castes hitherto named. Among them literacy is more common than among the poorer castes and they possess a high capacity for leadership. The Church needs the Reddis and the Kammas and great numbers of these singularly gifted people recognize their need for Christ and the fellowship of the Church. Honorary effort by teams of converted men and women from these castes is probably the most effective means of reinforcing the appeal of local Christians and bringing members of these castes to a decision for Christ,

The Lambadis are an aboriginal tribe that appears to be wide open for messengers of Christ, but presents peculiar difficulties arising from language and social patterns. At least a dozen groups aggregating more than a thousand persons have been received into the Church. Several converts from among them suggested independently that we urge the Churches and

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 107

Missions of Andhra Desa to set aside preachers and teachers to learn their language and spend their whole lives with them. Schools are taught in Telugu and within a generation or two the distinctive Lambadi language will likely have fallen into disuse, but the tribe could be well served at this stage by having a dozen young Christian couples dedicate their lives to its evangelization, learning its language customs and distinctive characteristics and sharing its difficult life for Christ's sake. These couples, if appointed, would need to guard against the assumption of such responsibility for evangelizing the tribe as would deprive converted groups of their initiative in spreading the Faith among their own people.

We will not go further in mentioning the castes within which movements toward Christ have developed, but we recommend that Churches and Missions ascertain what groups to whom they have access are represented in Christward movements anywhere by relatives or caste associates and seek to put the claims of Christ before them. In some cases it will be advisable to invite converts to visit areas where their testimony and example are needed. However, two dangers have already appeared in connection with such efforts namely (1) that the convert called upon to travel among his former caste fellows will be confirmed in an attitude of exclusiveness and be encouraged to import into the Church too much of the spirit and practice of his former caste, and (2) that the convert will develop a sort of professionalism in which considerations of monetary or other reward are evoked. In another part of India we learned of a man who was so elated by the honours

done him because he had influenced a few members of the caste in which he was born to become Christians that he made out a time table according to which one or two groups were allowed to become Christian each year—he wanted to be sure that his honours should last!

The Lay Convert and Evangelism

The fifth observation is that the growth of the Church is dependent upon the witness of unpaid lay Christians. We, therefore, recommend that all Churches and Missions consider ways and means of securing a large increase in honorary evangelistic effort by laymen. Every convert is a potential evangelist and the potentialities of many converts are enormous. One Waddara was found to have near relatives in fourteen villages. Within a year of his conversion he influenced six groups in which he had relatives to enrol as catechumens. A man's relatives, caste associates and neighbours are interested when they learn that he has become a Christian. Even though they may become angry and attempt to punish him they will await with eagerness some sign of the effect of his conversion upon him, and if he gives a clear witness to benefits received, peace and joy, moral victory and other fruits of the Spirit, they will be favourably impressed. Many converts with whom we talked told of their early opposition to relatives who preceded them in accepting Christ.

Co-operation by pastors and paid evangelists with unpaid lay Christians is ordinarily the most fruitful evangelistic effort in which the former can engage. The wisest of the paid agents of the Church recognize this fact, but many do not and practically ignore the

laymen of their congregations in their efforts to extend the Kingdom. We recommend that annually two special periods of evangelistic effort be arranged for in each Church during which the entire membership of the Church is encouraged to bear witness concerning Christ to relatives and friends.

VI

The Handicap of Foreignness

The sixth observation is that the growth of the Church is retarded by the aspect of foreignness and promoted by evidence of being Indian and indigenous. We, therefore, recommend that church polity, orders of worship, architecture, policies with reference to festivals, social customs, discipline and leadership be adapted as much and as speedily as possible to national and local conditions, subject, of course, to the preservation of Christian character and values. One of the secrets of the rapid growth of the Church in Andhra Desa is undoubtedly the progress already made toward such adaptation as we are recommending. An ardent young nationalist, a worker in the Indian National Congress, fought Christianity when he was acquainted only with Churches that were in most respects poor copies of the Churches of Western countries, but was drawn irresistibly to Christ when he came into contact with Churches that satisfied his demand for Indian characteristics. Asked what were the differences in the Churches that he regarded as "foreign" and those he accepted as "Indian," this zealous young man answered, "In music, in architecture, in seating arrangements, in the courts of the Church, in the administration of discipline, in the clothes worn by the minister and many of the members, in local organization, in attitudes

toward national problems and leaders and finally in the relations between Indian ministers and non-Indian missionaries." An older man said, "I was for a long time desirous of being a Christian but I thought that my conversion would place me in subjection to a minister of religion who is employed by a foreign organization and has to take orders from non-Indians. When I found that I could join an Indian Church that has control even over the foreign missionaries and that three-fourths of my minister's small allowances are found in India, my fears left me and I became an active enquirer." In this connection two considerations assume urgent importance, namely (1) that the Church move with all possible speed to the full support of its ordained regular ministry and to the administration of efforts for evangelism, and (2) that missionaries from abroad shall be relieved as rapidly as possible from administrative control of the Church. Where missionaries hold administrative offices in the church they should do so only by the free choice of their Indian colleagues and even then should be assured of the counsel and subject to the ultimate control of the Church.

Protecting the Purity of the Church

The seventh observation is that the Christian teachings against idolatry and for personal and group acceptance of the highest ethical standards of conduct appeal to the conscience and commend the Gospel. We recommend that more strenuous efforts be made to protect the Church against violation of these teachings. Despite the prevalence of idolatry, bribery, plural marriages, oppression and social impurity there is a widespread recognition of the evil of these practices

and a desire for their overthrow. The Church has raised the standards of judgment on all of these wrongs but needs to be on guard against the temptation to lower them and be untrue to itself on these issues. The coming into its membership of many people of the higher castes accentuates the danger of compromise. For example, it is difficult for a Church composed in the main of day labourers to enforce the demand for personal purity upon a rich landlord who lapses into immoral relations with a concubine or to discipline a village head man who accepts a bribe.

The Necessity for a Better Trained Ministry

The eighth observation is that the new movements into the Church combined with the rising cultural standards of the older Christian groups necessitate a better trained ministry. Many ministers who were quite adequate for the demands of a decade ago are not able to meet the requirements of the present situation. Happily, the educational preparation of the ministers now being recruited is quite superior. But many of the experienced men already at work require help. We recommend that short-term Refresher Courses be conducted annually for several years and that attendance be made compulsory for all ministers. The curricula of these Refresher Courses should include the history of Church growth in India, the organization and government of local congregations, the conduct of public worship, including the preparation of sermons for village audiences and enlisting the participation of the entire congregation, financing the Church and methods of evangelism. It is evident that many good men are accomplishing less than their potential best

because of their lack of training that might be acquired in such Refresher Courses. The following quotation is from a letter written by a minister six weeks after returning from a Refresher Course, "I am much encouraged. I understand my task better and know more clearly what to do. My people also are more responsive. They act like they had been in the Refresher Course, too. A revival has begun in three villages. People who were indifferant are attending service and praising God. Thirty-three enquirers have been enrolled, more than in five years before." Probably the primary need is the enrichment of the minister's own spiritual life, strengthening the Christian content of his heart and mind. To this end the Refresher Courses should partake largely of the nature of retreats for corporate seeking of the deepest reality in Christian experience.

A Supplementary Ministry by Lay Preachers

The ninth observation is that the use of school teachers, partly supported by grants-in-aid by Government and partly by mission subsidies, for pastoral work under the supervision of ordained ministers, cannot be expanded to meet actual present and probable future needs. We therefore recommend that steps be taken to enlist and train men who are able to maintain themselves in their villages as honorary, or semi-honorary, pastoral assistants to conduct every-evening worship services, to prepare candidates for baptism, to visit the sick and to do all kinds of ministerial work not necessarily reserved for the ordained ministry. Among the newer Christians are many men possessing gifts and graces which would enable them to render notable

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 113

service as lay preachers. Their appointment would need to be subject to the approval both of the local congregation and of some supervising authority.

A New Effort Against Illiteracy

The tenth observation is that the existing school system is disappointingly slow in producing a literate Church. We, therefore, recommend that the schools be supplemented by a non-institutional effort to promote literacy among adults and adolescents. Missions should make available as generous assistance as possible, in finance and personnel, for a sustained campaign to teach all Christians to read. Every effort and interest of the Church, including the spread of the Gospel and the social and economic life of its members would profit by the conquest of illiteracy. There are strong reasons for centering in the Church any extensive Mission effort in behalf of literacy. The most effective contribution the Christian movement can make to the conquest of illiteracy throughout the nation is to conquer the evil in its own ranks. We view with considerable distress the disposition in some areas to make the literacy campaign an alternative and a rival to the building of the Church. A Christian effort that brings a body of people to accept Jesus Christ as Lord, infuses into that body the spirit of service and equips it for service is incomparably more successful than an effort that renders service for a season and fails to produce a body to carry on down the years.

For More Adequate Literature

XI

The eleventh observation is that the supply of Christian literature is not yet adequate to the needs

of the Church in Andhra Desa and that the supply is superior to the distribution. We recommend that the Andhra Christian Council undertake responsibility for promoting a literature programme adequate with respect (1) to the preparation of what is needed, (2) to its publication, and (3) to its distribution. The chief difficulties relate to vocabulary, size of type and content. It seems to be impossible to meet all needs with one vocabulary. Beginners require larger type than do experienced readers. And the simple style necessary for the barely literate limits the value for those of more advanced standards. Books geared to the needs and capacities of two classes are especially needed now, namely, the awakening masses of the depressed and the enquiring vanguard of the higher castes. Regarding distribution, we found little cause for satisfaction. Of one group of twelve literate Reddi converts not employed by Church or Mission, only six had any Christian publication except the Bible in the home and only one had more than three books. Of twelve literate Wad-dara converts not employed, only four had a Christian book apart from the Bible and none had more than three.

A Better Ministry to Women and Girls

The twelfth observation is that the women and girls are less adequately cared for in the programme of the Church than are the men and the boys. We recommend that efforts be made to correct this situation (a) by including a larger number of women in the officiating of the Churches, (b) by promoting the organization of women's societies within the Church, (c) by using more lady workers in village service, and (d) by supplement-

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 115

tary classes for women in training for baptism and for communicant membership in the Church. The services of Christ to women and girls are recognized and produce a most favourable attitude toward Christianity in the minds of onlookers. The extension of the Kingdom would be greatly assisted by strengthening women's participation in the Church. The possibility of instituting an order of deaconesses should be considered. Despite obvious difficulties the case for the use of Indian deaconesses is very strong.

XIII The Menace of Caste

The thirteenth observation is that the Church is in urgent need of clarifying its thinking and purifying its attitude toward caste. We recommend (1) that the implications of the teachings of Christ and the apostles as touching this problem be studied throughout the Church in Andhra Desa, (2) that differences between Christians based upon caste origin be recognized as a menace to the spiritual integrity of the Church, (3) that help be requisitioned from the Churches in the north of India to promote the merging of converts from different castes into one inclusive community, and (4) that only such persons be enlisted in the ministry as have shown complete freedom from caste prejudice.

XIV The Strength of These Movements

The fourteenth and final observation is that the strength of the Christward movements in Andhra Desa is derived from the fact that God is there in Christ Jesus reconciling men and women unto himself. We

recommend that while striving to improve their work as friends of Christ and servants of God all who are related to the Church in Andhra Desa place their trust not in the efficiency of human endeavour or the power of man's wisdom but in the revealed purpose and the almighty power of God. We were impressed by the frequency with which new converts when asked who had influenced them to become Christians replied that no man had influenced them but they were moved directly by the Spirit of God. There is in the present movements a strong sense of the mystery of God at work in human hearts. A money-lender engaged in oppressing Christians, determined to destroy the Church, experiences a change of heart as a result of a dream and declares his Christian faith the next day. A woman, believed to be dying, rallies and declares that she has been allowed to return to life that she may be converted and win her relatives and neighbours. A land-lord, arising in the middle of the night and seeing a beam fall upon and smash the bed on which he had been sleeping, decides that he was awakened that he might have another chance to be converted. A school teacher, after opposing Christianity for twelve years, dreams three nights in succession that his father returns to life and tells him to follow Christ. The dangers that might be expected from this characteristic in the movements are reduced by the presence of an equally pronounced ethical quality. The money-lender makes restitution and asks pardon of those whom he had oppressed. The land-lord becomes the protector of the poor and the friend of the despised. The school teacher abandons an immoral relationship to which he had clung tenaciously.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 117

We come to the end of this study seeing more clearly than before that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life for Andhra Desa, the whole of India and the World. His way to the heart of any people is the way of revelation of himself in the lives of transformed men and women. That is the way he is moving now toward sovereignty over the heart of India.